# THE MOCCASIN MAKER

E. PAULINE JOHNSON.

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E. PAULINE JOHNSON

(The best photo of her in existence. Taken in 1904.)

# THE MOCCASIN MAKER

BY

E. PAULINE JOHNSON

Author of "The Shagganappi," "Flint and Feather," etc.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

SIR GILBERT PARKER

AND APPRECIATION BY

CHARLES MAIR

TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS
1913

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DEDICATED

TO

SIR GILBERT PARKER, M.P.

WHOSE WORK IN LITERATURE
HAS BROUGHT HONOUR
TO CANADA

# INTRODUCTION

THE inducement to be sympathetic in writing a preface to a book like this is naturally very great. The authoress was of Indian blood, and lived the life of the Indian on the Iroquois Reserve with her chieftain father and her white mother for many years; and though she had white blood in her veins was insistently and determinedly Indian to the end. She had the full pride of the aboriginal of pure blood, and she was possessed of a vital joy in the legends, history and language of the Indian race from which she came, crossed by good white stock. But though the inducement to be sympathetic in the case of so chivalrous a being who stood by the Indian blood rather than by the white blood in her is great, there is, happily, no necessity for generosity or magnanimity in the case of Pauline Johnson. She was not great, but her work in verse is sure and sincere; and it is alive with the true spirit of poetry. Her skill in mere technique is good, her handling of narrative is notable, and if there is no striking individuality—which might have been expected from her Indian origin—if she was

often reminiscent in her manner, metre, form and expression, it only proves her a minor poet and not a Tennyson or a Browning. That she should have done what she did do, devotedly, with an astonishing charm and the delight of inspired labour, makes her life memorable, as it certainly made both life and work beautiful. The pain and suffering which attended the latter part of her life never found its way into her work save through increased sweetness and pensiveness. No shadow of death fell upon her pages. To the last the soul ruled the body to its will. Phenomenon Pauline Johnson was, though to call her a genius would be to place her among the immortals, and no one was more conscious of her limitations than herself Therefore, it would do her memory poor service to give her a crown instead of a coronet.

Poet she was, lyric and singing and happy, bright-visioned, high-hearted, and with the Indian's passionate love of nature thrilling in all she did, even when from the hunting-grounds of poesy she brought back now and then a poor day's capture. She was never without charm in her writing; indeed, mere charm was too often her undoing. She could not be impersonal enough, and therefore could not be great; but she could get very near to human sympathies, to domestic natures, to those who care for pleasant, happy things, to the lovers of the wild.

This is what she has done in this book called "The Moccasin Maker." Here is a good deal that is biographical and autobiographical in its nature; here is the story of her mother's life told with rare graciousness and affection, in language which is never without eloquence; and even when the dialogue makes you feel that the real characters never talked as they do in this monograph, it is still unstilted and somehow really convincing. Touching to a degree is the first chapter, "My Mother," and it, with all the rest of the book, makes one feel that Canadian literature would have been poorer, that something would have been missed from the story of Indian life if this volume had not been written. It is no argument against the book that Pauline Johnson had not learnt the art of short-story writing; she was a poetess, not a writer of fiction; but the incidents described in many of these chapters show that, had she chosen to write fiction instead of verse, and had begun at an early stage in her career to do so, she would have succeeded. Her style is always picturesque, she has a good sense of the salient incident that makes a story, she could give to it the touch of drama, and she is always interesting, even when there is discursiveness, occasional weakness, and when the picture is not well pulled together. The book had to be written; she knew it, and she did it. The book will be read, not for patriotic reasons, not from

admiration of work achieved by one of the Indian race; but because it is intrinsically human, interesting and often compelling in narrative and event.

May it be permitted to add one word of personal comment? I never saw Pauline Johnson in her own land, at her own hearthstone, but only in my house in London and at other houses in London, where she brought a breath of the wild; not because she dressed in Indian costume, but because its atmosphere was round her. The feeling of the wild looked out of her eyes, stirred in her gesture, moved in her footstep. I am glad to have known this rare creature who had the courage to be glad of her origin, without defiance, but with an unchanging, if unspoken, insistence. Her native land and the Empire should be glad of her for what she was and for what she stood; her native land and the Empire should be glad of her for the work, interesting, vivid and human, which she has done. It will preserve her memory. In an age growing sordid such fresh spirits as she should be welcomed for what they are, for what they do. This book by Pauline Johnson should be welcomed for what she was and for what it is.

GILBERT PARKER.

# PAULINE JOHNSON: AN APPRECIATION.

By Charles Mair.

The writer, having contributed a brief "Appreciation" of the late Miss E. Pauline Johnson to the July number of *The Canadian Magazine,* has been asked by the editor of this collection of her hitherto unpublished writings to allow it to be used as a Preface, with such additions or omissions as might seem desirable. He has not yet seen any portion of the book, but quite apart from its merits it is eagerly looked for by Miss Johnson's many friends and admirers as a final memorial of her literary life. It will now be read with an added interest, begot of her painfully sad and untimely end.

In the death of Miss Johnson a poet passed away of undoubted genius; one who wrote with passion, but without extravagance, and upon themes foreign, perhaps, to some of her readers, but, to herself, familiar as the air she breathed.

When her racial poetry first appeared, its effect upon the reader was as that of something abnormal, something new and strange, and certainly unexampled in Canadian verse. For here was a girl whose blood and sympathies were largely drawn from the greatest tribe of the most

advanced nation of Indians on the continent, who spoke out, "loud and bold," not for it alone, but for the whole red race, and sang of its glories and its wrongs in strains of poetic fire.

However aloof the sympathies of the ordinary business world may be from the red man's record, even it is moved at times by his fate, and stirred by his persistent, his inevitable romance. For the Indian's record is the background, and not seldom the foreground, of American history, in which his endless contests with the invader were but a counterpart of the unwritten, or recorded, struggles of all primitive time.

In that long strife the bitterest charge against him is his barbarity, which, if all that is alleged is to be believed—and much of it is authentic—constitutes in the annals of pioneer settlement and aggression a chapter of horrors.

But equally vindictive was his enemy, the American frontiersman. Burnings at the stake, scalping, and other savageries, were not confined to the red man. But whilst his are depicted by the interested writers of the time in the most lurid colours, those of the frontiersman, equally barbarous, are too often palliated, or entirely passed by. It is manifestly unjust to characterize a whole people by its worst members. Of such, amongst both Indians and whites, there were not a few; but it is equally unfair to ascribe to a naturally cruel disposition the infuriated red man's reprisals for intolerable wrongs. As a

THE GRAVE OF PAULINE JOHNSON IN STANLEY PARK, NEAR SIWASH ROCK.

The rude railing and stone to be replaced by a fitting Memorial.

matter of fact, impartial history not seldom leans to the red man's side; for, in his ordinary and peaceful intercourse with the whites, he was, as a rule, both helpful and humane. In the records of early explorers we are told of savages who possessed estimable qualities lamentably lacking in many so-called civilized men. The Illinois, an inland tribe, exhibited such tact, courtesy and self-restraint, in a word, such good manners, that the Jesuit Fathers described them as a community of gentlemen. Such traits, indeed, were natural to the primitive Indian, and gave rise, no doubt, to the much-derided phrase—"The Noble Red Man."

There may be some readers of these lines old enough to remember the great Indians of the plains in times past, who will bear the writer out in saying that such traits were not uncommon down to comparatively recent years. Tatonkanazin the Dahcota, Sapo-Maxika the Blackfoot, Atakakoop the Cree, not to speak of Yellow Quill and others, were noted in their day for their noble features and dignified deportment.

In our history the Indians hold an honoured place, and the average reader need not be told that, at one time, their services were essential to Canada. They appreciated British justice, and their greatest nations produced great men, who, in the hour of need, helped materially to preserve our independence. They failed, however, for manifest reasons, to maintain their own. They

had to yield; but, before quitting the stage, they left behind them an abiding memory, and an undying tradition. And, thus, "Romanticism," which will hold its own despite its hostile critics, is their debtor. Their closeness to nature, their picturesque life in the past, their mythical religion, social system and fateful history have begot one of the wide world's "legends," an ideal not wholly imaginary, which, as a counterpoise to Realism, our literature needs, and probably never shall outgrow.

These references to the Indian character may seem too extended for their place, yet they are *genre* to the writer's subject. For Miss Johnson's mentality was moulded by descent, by ample knowledge of her people's history, admiration of their character, and profound interest in their fate.

Hence the oncoming into the field of letters of a real Indian poet had a significance which, aided by its novelty, was immediately appreciated by all that was best in Canadian culture. Hence, too, and by reason of its strength, her work at once took its fitting place without jar or hindrance; for there are few educated Canadians who do not possess, in some measure, that aboriginal, historic sense which was the very atmosphere of Pauline Johnson's being.

But whilst "the Indian" was never far from her thoughts, she was a poet, and therefore inevitably winged her way into the world of art, into

the realm common to all countries, and to all peoples. Here there was room for her imaginings, endowed, as she was, with power to appeal to the heart, with refinement, delicacy, pathos, and, above all, sincerity; an Idealist, who fused the inner and the outer world, and revelled in the unification of scenery and mind.

The delight of genius in the act of composition has been called the keenest of intellectual pleasures; and this was the poet's almost sole reward in Canada a generation ago, when nothing seemed to catch the popular ear but burlesque, or trivial verse. In strange contrast this with a remoter age! In old Upper Canada, in its primitive days, there was no lack of educated men and women, of cultivated pioneers who appreciated art and good literature in all its forms. Even the average immigrant brought his favourite books with him from the Old Land, and cherished a love of reading, which unfortunately was not always inherited by his sons. It was a fit audience, no doubt; but in a period when all alike were engrossed in a stern struggle for existence, the poets, and we know there were some, were forced, like other people, to earn, by labour of hand, their daily bread. Thackeray's "dapper" George is credited with the saying, that, "If beebles will be boets they must starve." If in England their struggle was severe, in Canada it was unrelenting; a bald prospect, certainly, which lasted, one is sorry to say, far down in our literary history.

Probably owing to this, and partly through advice, and partly by inclination, Miss Johnson took to the public platform for a living, and certainly justified her choice of a vocation by her admirable performances. They were not sensational, and therefore not over-attractive to the groundling; but to discerners, who thought highly of her art, they seemed the perfection of monologue, graced by a musical voice, and by gesture at once simple and dignified.

As this is an appreciation and a tribute to Miss Johnson's memory rather than a criticism, the writer will touch but lightly upon the more prominent features of her productions. Without being obtrusive, not the least of these is her national pride, for nothing worthier, she thought, could be said of a man than

"That he was born in Canada, beneath the British flag."

In her political creed wavering and uncertainty had no place. She saw our national life from its most salient angles, and, in current phrase, she saw it whole. In common, therefore, with every Canadian poet of eminence, she had no fears for Canada, if she be but true to herself.

Another opinion is not likely to be challenged, viz., that much of her poetry is unique, not only in subject, but also in the sincerity of her treatment of themes so far removed from the common range. Intense feeling distinguishes her Indian

poems from all others; they flow from her very veins, and are stamped with the seal of heredity. This strikes one at every reading, and not less their truth to fact, however idealized. Indeed the wildest of them, "Ojistoh" (The White Wampum), is based upon an actual occurrence, though the incident took place on the Western plains, and the heroine was not a Mohawk. The same intensity marks "The Cattle Thief," and "A Cry From an Indian Wife." Begot of her knowledge of the long-suffering of her race, of iniquities in the past and present, they poured red-hot from her inmost heart.

One turns, however, with a sense of relief from those fierce dithyrambics to the beauty and pathos of her other poems. Take, for example, that exquisite piece of music, "The Lullaby of the Iroquois," simple, yet entrancing! Could anything of its kind be more perfect in structure and expression? Or the sweet idyll, "Shadow River," a transmutation of fancy and fact, which ends with her own philosophy:

> "O pathless world of seeming!
> O pathless life of mine whose deep ideal
> Is more my own than ever was the real.
> For others fame
> And Love's red flame,
> And yellow gold: I only claim
> The shadows and the dreaming."

And this ideality, the hall-mark of her poetry, has a character of its own, a quality which dis-

tinguishes it from the general run of subjective verse. Though of the Christian faith, there is yet an almost pagan yearning manifest in her work, which she indubitably drew from her Indian ancestry. That is, she was in constant contact with nature, and saw herself, her every thought and feeling, reflected in the mysterious world around her.

This sense of harmony is indeed the prime motive of her poetry, and therein we discern a brightness, a gleam, however fleeting, of mystic light—

> "The light that never was on sea or land,
> The consecration and the poet's dream."

A suggestion of her attitude and sense of interpenetration lurks in this stanza:

> "There's a spirit on the river, there's a ghost upon the shore,
> And they sing of love and loving through the starlight evermore,
> As they steal amid the silence and the shadows of the shore."

And in the following verses this "correspondence" is more distinctly drawn:

> "O soft responsive voices of the night,
> I join your minstrelsy,
> And call across the fading silver light
> As something calls to me;
> I may not all your meaning understand,
> But I have touched your soul in Shadow Land."

SIWASH ROCK

Near which Miss Johnson wished her ashes to be buried.

"Sweetness and light" met in Miss Johnson's nature, but free from sentimentality; and even a carping critic will find little to cavil at in her productions. If fault should be found with any of them it would probably be with such a narrative as "Wolverine." It "bites," like all her Indian pieces, and conveys a definite meaning. But, written in the conventional slang of the frontier, it jars with her other work, and seems out of form, if not out of place.

However, no poet escapes a break at times, and Miss Johnson's work is not to be judged, like a chain, by its weakest links. Its beauty, its strength, its originality are unmistakable, and although, had she lived, we might have looked for still higher flights of her genius, yet what we possess is beyond price, and fully justifies the feeling, everywhere expressed, that Canada has lost a true poet.

Such a loss may not be thought a serious one by the sordid man who decries poetry as the useless product of an art already in its decay. Should this ever be the case, it would be a monstrous symptom, a symptom that the noblest impulses of the human heart are decaying also. The truth is, as the greatest of English critics, Hazlitt, has told us, that "poetry is an interesting study, for this reason, that it relates to whatever is most interesting in human life. Whoever, therefore, has a contempt for poetry, has a contempt for himself and humanity."

Turning from Miss Johnson's verse to her prose, there is ample evidence that, had she applied herself, she would have taken high rank as a writer of fiction. Her "Legends of Vancouver" is a remarkable book, in which she relates a number of Coast-Indian myths and traditions with unerring insight and literary skill. These legends had a main source in the person of the famous old Chief, Capilano, who, for the first time, revealed them to her in Chinook, or in broken English, and, as reproduced in her rich and harmonious prose, belong emphatically to what has been called "The literature of power." Bound together, so to speak, in the retentive memory of the old Chief, they are authentic legends of his people, and true to the Indian nature. But we find in them, also, something that transcends history. Indefinable forms, earthly and unearthly, pass before us in mystical procession, in a world beyond ordinary conception, in which nothing seems impossible.

The origin of the Indian's myths, East or West, cannot be traced, and must ever remain a mystery. But, from his immemorial ceremonies and intense conservatism, we may reasonably infer that many of them have been handed down from father to son, unchanged, from the prehistoric past to the present day; a past contemporary, perhaps, with the mastodon, but certainly far back in the mists of antiquity. The importance of rescuing them from oblivion is plain enough,

THE SPIRIT OF SIWASH ROCK.

Design for Canadian Memorial for Pauline Johnson, submitted by Sergison Marega.
Victoria, B.C.

and therefore the untimely death of Miss Johnson, who was evidently turning with congenital fitness to the task, is doubly to be regretted. For as Mr. Bernard McEvoy well says in his preface to her "Vancouver Legends," she "has linked the vivid present with the immemorial past. . . . In the imaginative power that she has brought to these semi-historic Sagas, and in the liquid flow of her rhythmical prose she has shown herself to be a literary worker of whom we may well be proud."

It is believed to be the general wish of Miss Johnson's friends that some tribute of a national and permanent character should be paid to her memory; not indeed to preserve it—her own works will do that—but as a visible mark of public esteem. In this regard, what could be better than a bronze statue of life-size, with such accompanying symbols as would naturally suggest themselves to a competent artist? Vancouver, in which she spent her latter years, the city she loved, and in which she died, is its proper home; and, as to its site, the spot in Stanley Park where she wished her ashes to be laid is surely, of all places, the most appropriate.

But whatever shape, in the opinion of her friends, the memorial should take, it is important, in any case, that it should be worthy of her genius, and a fitting memento of her services to Canadian letters.

Fort Steele, B.C., September, 1913.

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# My Mother

**The Story of a Life of Unusual Experiences**

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[AUTHOR'S NOTE.—This is the story of my mother's life, every incident of which she related to me herself. I have neither exaggerated nor curtailed a single circumstance in relating this story. I have supplied nothing through imagination, nor have I heightened the coloring of her unusual experiences. Had I done so I could not possibly feel as sure of her approval as I now do, for she is as near to me to-day as she was before she left me to join her husband, my beloved father, whose feet have long since wandered to the "Happy Hunting Grounds" of my dear Red Ancestors.]

## PART I.

IT was a very lonely little girl that stood on the deck of a huge sailing vessel while the shores of England slipped down into the horizon and the great, grey Atlantic yawned desolately westward. She was leaving so much behind her, taking so little with her, for the child was grave and old even at the age of eight, and realized

that this day meant the updragging of all the tiny roots that clung to the home soil of the older land. Her father was taking his wife and family, his household goods, his fortune and his future to America, which, in the days of 1829, was indeed a venturesome step, for America was regarded as remote as the North Pole, and good-byes were, alas! very real good-byes, when travellers set sail for the New World in those times before steam and telegraph brought the two continents hand almost touching hand.

So little Lydia Bestman stood drearily watching with sorrow-filled eyes the England of her babyhood fade slowly into the distance—eyes that were fated never to see again the royal old land of her birth. Already the deepest grief that life could hold had touched her young heart. She had lost her own gentle, London-bred mother when she was but two years old. Her father had married again, and on her sixth birthday little Lydia, the youngest of a large family, had been sent away to boarding-school with an elder sister, and her home knew her no more. She was taken from school to the sailing ship; little stepbrothers and sisters had arrived and she was no longer the baby. Years afterwards she told her own little children that her one vivid recollection of England was the exquisite music of the church chimes as the ship weighed anchor in Bristol harbor—chimes that

were ringing for evensong from the towers of the quaint old English churches. Thirteen weeks later that sailing vessel entered New York harbor, and life in the New World began.

Like most transplanted Englishmen, Mr. Bestman cut himself completely off from the land of his fathers; his interests and his friends henceforth were all in the country of his adoption, and he chose Ohio as a site for his new home. He was a man of vast peculiarities, prejudices and extreme ideas—a man of contradictions so glaring that even his own children never understood him. He was a very narrow religionist, of the type that say many prayers and quote much Scripture, but he beat his children—both girls and boys—so severely that outsiders were at times compelled to interfere. For years these unfortunate children carried the scars left on their backs by the thongs of cat-o'-nine-tails when he punished them for some slight misdemeanor. They were all terrified at him, all obeyed him like soldiers, but none escaped his severity. The two elder ones, a boy and a girl, had married before they left England. The next girl married in Ohio, and the boys drifted away, glad to escape from a parental tyranny that made home anything but a desirable abiding-place. Finally but two remained of the first family—Lydia and her sister Elizabeth, a most lovable girl of seventeen, whose beauty of character and self-sacrific-

ing heart made the one bright memory that remained with these scattered fledglings throughout their entire lives.

The lady who occupied the undesirable position of stepmother to these unfortunate children was of the very cold and chilling type of Englishwoman, more frequently met with two generations ago than in this age. She simply let her husband's first family alone. She took no interest in them, neglected them absolutely, but in her neglect was far kinder and more humane than their own father. Yet she saw that all the money, all the pretty clothes, all the dainties, went to her own children.

Perhaps the reader will think these unpleasant characteristics of a harsh father and a self-centred stepmother might better be omitted from this narrative, particularly as death claimed these two many years ago; but in the light of after events, it is necessary to reveal what the home environment of these children had been, how little of companionship or kindness or spoken love had entered their baby lives. The absence of mother kisses, of father comradeship, of endeavor to understand them individually, to probe their separate and various dispositions—things so essential to the development of all that is best in a child—went far towards governing their later actions in life. It drove the unselfish, sweet-hearted Elizabeth to a loveless marriage;

it flung poor, little love-hungry Lydia into alien but, fortunately, loyal and noble arms. Outsiders said, "What strange marriages!" But Lydia, at least, married where the first real kindness she had ever known called to her, and not one day of regret for that marriage ever entered into her life.

It came about so strangely, so inevitably, from such a tiny source, that it is almost incredible.

One day the stepmother, contrary to her usual custom, went into the kitchen and baked a number of little cakelets, probably what we would call cookies. For what sinister reason no one could divine, but she counted these cakes as she took them from the baking-pans and placed them in the pantry. There were forty-nine, all told. That evening she counted them again; there were forty-eight. Then she complained to her husband that one of the children had evidently stolen a cake. (In her mind the two negro servants employed in the house did not merit the suspicion.) Mr. Bestman inquired which child was fond of the cakes. Mrs. Bestman replied that she did not know, unless it was Lydia, who always liked them.

Lydia was called. Her father, frowning, asked if she had taken the cake. The child said no.

"You are not telling the truth," Mr. Bestman shouted, as the poor little downtrodden girl

stood half terrified, consequently half guilty-mannered, before him.

"But I am truthful," she said. "I know nothing of the cake."

"You are not truthful. You stole it—you know you did. You shall be punished for this falsehood," he stormed, and reached for the cat-o'-nine-tails.

The child was beaten brutally and sent to her room until she could tell the truth. When she was released she still held that she had not taken the cooky. Another beating followed, then a third, when finally the stepmother interfered and said magnanimously:

"Don't whip her any more; she has been punished enough." And once during one of the beatings she protested, saying, "Don't strike the child *on the head* that way."

But the iron had entered into Lydia's sister's soul. The injustice of it all drove gentle Elizabeth's gentleness to the winds.

"Liddy darling," she said, taking the thirteen-year-old girl-child into her strong young arms, "*I* know truth when I hear it. *You* never stole that cake."

"I didn't," sobbed the child, "I didn't."

"And you have been beaten three times for it!" And the sweet young mouth hardened into lines that were far too severe for a girl of seventeen. Then: "Liddy, do you know that Mr. Evans has asked me to marry him?"

"Mr. Evans!" exclaimed the child. "Why, you can't marry *him*, 'Liza! He's ever so old, and he lives away up in Canada, among the Indians."

"That's one of the reasons that I should like to marry him," said Elizabeth, her young eyes starry with zeal. "I want to work among the Indians, to help in Christianizing them, to—oh! just to help."

"But Mr. Evans is so *old*," reiterated Lydia.

"Only thirty," answered the sister; "and he is such a splendid missionary, dear."

Love? No one talked of love in that household except the contradictory father, who continually talked of the love of God, but forgot to reflect that love towards his own children.

Human love was considered a non-essential in that family. Beautiful-spirited Elizabeth had hardly heard the word. Even Mr. Evans had not made use of it. He had selected her as his wife more for her loveliness of character than from any personal attraction, and she in her untaught womanhood married him, more for the reason that she desired to be a laborer in Christ's vineyard than because of any wish to be the wife of this one man.

But after the marriage ceremony, this gentle girl looked boldly into her father's eyes and said:

"I am going to take Liddy with me into the wilds of Canada."

"Well, well, well!" said her father, English-fashion. "If she wants to go, she may."

Go? The child fairly clung to the fingers of this savior-sister—the poor little, inexperienced, seventeen-year-old bride who was giving up her youth and her girlhood to lay it all upon the shrine of endeavor to bring the radiance of the Star that shone above Bethlehem to reflect its glories upon a forest-bred people of the North!

It was a long, strange journey that the bride and her little sister took. A stage coach conveyed them from their home in Ohio to Erie, Pennsylvania, where they went aboard a sailing vessel bound for Buffalo. There they crossed the Niagara River, and at Chippewa, on the Canadian side, again took a stage coach for the village of Brantford, sixty miles west.

At this place they remained over night, and the following day Mr. Evans' own conveyance arrived to fetch them to the Indian Reserve, ten miles to the southeast.

In after years little Lydia used to tell that during that entire drive she thought she was going through an English avenue leading to some great estate, for the trees crowded up close to the roadway on either side, giant forest trees—gnarled oaks, singing firs, jaunty maples, graceful elms—all stretching their branches overhead. But the "avenue" seemed endless. "When do we come to the house?" she asked, innocently. "This lane is very long."

But it was three hours, over a rough corduroy road, before the little white frame parsonage lifted its roof through the forest, its broad verandahs and green outside shutters welcoming the travellers with an atmosphere of home at last.

As the horses drew up before the porch the great front door was noiselessly opened and a lad of seventeen, lithe, clean-limbed, erect, copper-colored, ran swiftly down the steps, lifted his hat, smiled, and assisted the ladies to alight. The boy was Indian to the finger-tips, with that peculiar native polish and courtesy, that absolute ease of manner and direction of glance, possessed only by the old-fashioned type of red man of this continent. The missionary introduced him as "My young friend, the church interpreter, Mr. George Mansion, who is one of our household." (Mansion, or "Grand Mansion," is the English meaning of this young Mohawk's native name.)

The entire personality of the missionary seemed to undergo a change as his eyes rested on this youth. His hitherto rather stilted manner relaxed, his eyes softened and glowed, he invited confidence rather than repelled it; truly his heart was bound up with these forest people; he fairly exhaled love for them with every breath. He was a man of marked shyness, and these silent Indians made him forget this peculiarity of which he was sorrowfully conscious. It was probably this shyness that caused him to open

the door and turn to his young wife with the ill-selected remark: "Welcome home, madam."

*Madam!* The little bride was chilled to the heart with the austere word. She hurried within, followed by her wondering child-sister, as soon as possible sought her room, then gave way to a storm of tears.

"Don't mind me, Liddy," she sobbed. "There's nothing wrong; we'll be happy enough here, only I think I looked for a little—petting."

With a wisdom beyond her years, Lydia did not reply, but went to the window and gazed absently at the tiny patch of flowers beyond the door—the two lilac trees in full blossom, the thread of glistening river, and behind it all, the northern wilderness. Just below the window stood the missionary and the Indian boy talking eagerly.

"Isn't George Mansion *splendid!*" said the child.

"You must call him Mr. Mansion; be very careful about the *Mister*, Liddy dear," said her sister, rising and drying her eyes bravely. "I have always heard that the Indians treat one just as they are treated by one. Respect Mr. Mansion, treat him as you would treat a city gentleman. Be sure he will gauge his deportment by ours. Yes, dear, he *is* splendid. I like him already."

"Yes, 'Liza, so do I, and he *is* a gentleman. He looks it and acts it. I believe he *thinks* gentlemanly things."

Elizabeth laughed. "You dear little soul!" she said. "I know what you mean, and I agree with you."

That laugh was all that Lydia wanted to hear in this world, and presently the two sisters, with arms entwined, descended the stairway and joined in the conversation between Mr. Evans and young George Mansion.

"Mrs. Evans," said the boy, addressing her directly for the first time, "I hoped you were fond of game. Yesterday I hunted; it was partridge I got, and one fine deer. Will you offer me the compliment of having some for dinner to-night?"

His voice was low and very distinct, his accent and expressions very marked as a foreigner to the tongue, but his English was perfect.

"Indeed I shall, Mr. Mansion," smiled the girl-bride, "but I'm afraid that I don't know how to cook it."

"We have an excellent cook," said Mr. Evans. "She has been with George and me ever since I came here. George is a splendid shot, and keeps her busy getting us game suppers."

Meanwhile Lydia had been observing the boy. She had never seen an Indian, consequently was trying to reform her ideas regarding them. She had not expected to see anything like this self-poised, scrupulously-dressed, fine-featured, dark stripling. She thought all Indians wore savage-looking clothes, had fierce eyes and stern, set

mouths. This boy's eyes were narrow and shrewd, but warm and kindly, his lips were like a Cupid's bow, his hands were narrower, smaller, than her own, but the firmness of those slim fingers, the power in those small palms, as he had helped her from the carriage, remained with her through all the years to come.

That evening at supper she noted his table deportment; it was correct in every detail. He ate leisurely, silently, gracefully; his knife and fork never clattered, his elbows never were in evidence, he made use of the right plates, spoons, forks, knives; he bore an ease, an unconsciousness of manner, that amazed her. The missionary himself was a stiff man, and his very shyness made him angular. Against such a setting young Mansion gleamed like a brown gem.

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For seven years life rolled slowly by. At times Lydia went to visit her two other married sisters, sometimes she remained for weeks with a married brother, and at rare intervals made brief trips to her father's house; but she never received a penny from her strange parent, and knew of but one home which was worthy the name. That was in the Canadian wilderness where the Indian Mission held out its arms to her, and the beloved sister made her more welcome than words could imply. Four pretty

children had come to grace this forest household, where young George Mansion, still the veriest right hand of the missionary, had grown into a magnificent type of Mohawk manhood. These years had brought him much, and he had accomplished far more than idle chance could ever throw in his way. He had saved his salary that he earned as interpreter in the church, and had purchased some desirable property, a beautiful estate of two hundred acres, upon which he some day hoped to build a home. He had mastered six Indian languages, which, with his knowledge of English and his wonderful fluency in his own tribal Mohawk, gave him command of eight tongues, an advantage which soon brought him the position of Government interpreter in the Council of the great "Six Nations," composing the Iroquois race. Added to this, through the death of an uncle he came into the younger title of his family, which boasted blood of two noble lines. His father, speaker of the Council, held the elder title, but that did not lessen the importance of young George's title of chief.

Lydia never forgot the first time she saw him robed in the full costume of his office. Hitherto she had regarded him through all her comings and goings as her playmate, friend and boon companion; he had been to her something that had never before entered her life—he had brought warmth, kindness, fellowship and a peculiar

confidential humanity that had been entirely lacking in the chill English home of her childhood. But this day, as he stood beside his veteran father, ready to take his place among the chiefs of the Grand Council, she saw revealed another phase of his life and character; she saw that he was destined to be a man among men, and for the first time she realized that her boy companion had gone a little beyond her, perhaps a little above her. They were a strange pair as they stood somewhat apart, unconscious of the picture they made. She, a gentle-born, fair English girl of twenty, her simple blue muslin frock vying with her eyes in color. He, tawny skinned, lithe, straight as an arrow, the royal blood of generations of chiefs and warriors pulsing through his arteries, his clinging buckskin tunic and leggings fringed and embroidered with countless quills, and endless stitches of colored moosehair. From his small, neat moccasins to his jet black hair tipped with an eagle plume he was every inch a man, a gentleman, a warrior.

But he was approaching her with the same ease with which he wore his ordinary "white" clothes—garments, whether buckskin or broadcloth, seemed to make but slight impression on him.

"Miss Bestman," he said, "I should like you to meet my mother and father. They are here,

and are old friends of your sister and Mr. Evans. My mother does not speak the English, but she knows you are my friend."

And presently Lydia found herself shaking hands with the elder chief, speaker of the council, who spoke English rather well, and with a little dark woman folded within a "broadcloth" and wearing the leggings, moccasins and short dress of her people. A curious feeling of shyness overcame the girl as her hand met that of George Mansion's mother, who herself was the most retiring, most thoroughly old-fashioned woman of her tribe. But Lydia felt that she was in the presence of one whom the young chief held far and away as above himself, as above her, as the best and greatest woman of his world; his very manner revealed it, and Lydia honored him within her heart at that moment more than she had ever done before.

But Chief George Mansion's mother, small and silent through long habit and custom, had acquired a certain masterful dignity of her own, for within her slender brown fingers she held a power that no man of her nation could wrest from her. She was "Chief Matron" of her entire blood relations, and commanded the enviable position of being the one and only person, man or woman, who could appoint a chief to fill the vacancy of one of the great Mohawk law-makers whose seat in Council had been left vacant when

the voice of the Great Spirit called him to the happy hunting grounds. Lydia had heard of this national honor which was the right and title of this frail little moccasined Indian woman with whom she was shaking hands, and the thought flashed rapidly through her girlish mind: "Suppose some *one* lady in England had the marvellous power of appointing who the member should be in the British House of Lords or Commons. *Wouldn't* Great Britain honor and tremble before her?"

And here was Chief George Mansion's silent, unpretentious little mother possessing all this power among her people, and she, Lydia Bestman, was shaking hands with her! It seemed very marvellous.

But that night the power of this same slender Indian mother was brought vividly before her when, unintentionally, she overheard young George say to the missionary:

"I almost lost my new title to-day, after you and the ladies had left the Council."

"Why, George boy!" exclaimed Mr. Evans. "What have you done?"

"Nothing, it seems, except to be successful. The Council objected to my holding the title of chief and having a chief's vote in the affairs of the people, and at the same time being Government interpreter. They said it would give me too much power to retain both positions. I

must give up one—my title or my Government position."

"What did you do?" demanded Mr. Evans, eagerly.

"Nothing, again," smiled the young chief. "But my mother did something. She took the floor of the Council, and spoke for forty minutes. She said I must hold the position of chief which she had made for me, as well as of interpreter which I had made for myself; that if the Council objected, she would forever annul the chief's title in her own family; she would never appoint one in my place, and that we proud, arrogant Mohawks would then have only eight representatives in Council—only be on a level with, as she expressed it, 'those dogs of Senecas.' Then she clutched her broadcloth about her, turned her back on us all, and left the Council."

"What did the Council do?" gasped Mr. Evans.

"Accepted me as chief and interpreter," replied the young man, smiling. "There was nothing else to do."

"Oh, you royal woman! You loyal, loyal mother!" cried Lydia to herself. "How I love you for it!"

Then she crept away just as Mr. Evans had sprung forward with both hands extended towards the young chief, his eyes beaming with almost fatherly delight.

Unconsciously to herself, the English girl's interest in the young chief had grown rapidly year after year. She was also unconscious of his aim at constant companionship with herself. His devotion to her sister, whose delicate health alarmed them all, more and more, as time went on, was only another royal road to Lydia's heart. Elizabeth was becoming frail, shadowy, her appetite was fitful, her eyes larger and more wistful, her fingers smaller and weaker. No one seemed to realize the insidious oncreepings of "the white man's disease," consumption, that was paling Elizabeth's fine English skin, heightening her glorious English color, sapping her delicate English veins. Only young George would tell himself over and over: "Mrs. Evans is going away from us some day, and Lydia will be left with no one in the world but me—no one but me to understand—or to—care."

So he scoured the forest for dainties, wild fruits, game, flowers, to tempt the appetite and the eye of the fading wife of the man who had taught him all the English and the white man's etiquette that he had ever mastered. Night after night he would return from day-long hunting trips, his game-bag filled with delicate quail, rare woodcock, snowy-breasted partridge, and when the illusive appetite of the sick woman could be coaxed to partake of a morsel, he felt repaid for miles of tramping through forest trails, for hours of search and skill.

## PART II.

PERHAPS it was this grey shadow stealing on the forest mission, the thought of the day when that beautiful mothering sister would leave his little friend Lydia alone with a bereft man and four small children, or perhaps it was a yet more personal note in his life that brought George Mansion to the realization of what this girl had grown to be to him.

Indian-wise, his parents had arranged a suitable marriage for him, selecting a girl of his own tribe, of the correct clan to mate with his own, so that the line of blood heritage would be intact, and the sons of the next generation would be of the "Blood Royal," qualified by rightful lineage to inherit the title of chief.

This Mohawk girl was attractive, young, and had a partial English education. Her parents were fairly prosperous, owners of many acres, and much forest and timber country. The arrangement was regarded as an ideal one—the young people as perfectly and diplomatically mated as it was possible to be; but when his parents approached the young chief with the proposition, he met it with instant refusal.

"My father, my mother," he begged, "I ask you to forgive me this one disobedience. I ask you to forgive that I have, amid my fight and struggle

for English education, forgotten a single custom of my people. I have tried to honor all the ancient rules and usages of my forefathers, but I forgot this one thing, and I cannot, cannot do it! My wife I must choose for myself."

"You will marry—whom, then?" asked the old chief.

"I have given no thought to it—yet," he faltered.

"Yes," said his mother, urged by the knowing heart of a woman, "yes, George, you have thought of it."

"Only this hour," he answered, looking directly into his mother's eyes. "Only now that I see you want me to give my life to someone else. But my life belongs to the white girl, Mrs. Evans' sister, if she will take it. I shall offer it to her to-morrow—to-day."

His mother's face took on the shadow of age. "You would marry a *white* girl?" she exclaimed, incredulously.

"Yes," came the reply, briefly, decidedly.

"But your children, your sons and hers—they could never hold the title, never be chief," she said, rising to her feet.

He winced. "I know it. I had not thought of it before—but I know it. Still, I would marry her."

"But there would be no more chiefs of the Grand Mansion name," cut in his father. "The

title would go to your aunt's sons. She is a Grand Mansion no longer; she, being married, is merely a Straight-Shot, her husband's name. The Straight-Shots never had noble blood, never wore a title. Shall our family title go to a *Straight-Shot?*" and the elder chief mouthed the name contemptuously.

Again the boy winced. The hurt of it all was sinking in—he hated the Straight-Shots, he loved his own blood and bone. With lightning rapidity he weighed it all mentally, then spoke: "Perhaps the white girl will not marry me," he said slowly, and the thought of it drove the dark red from his cheeks, drove his finger-nails into his palms.

"Then, then you will marry Dawendine, our choice?" cried his mother, hopefully.

"I shall marry no one but the white girl," he answered, with set lips. "If she will not marry me, I shall never marry, so the Straight-Shots will have our title, anyway."

The door closed behind him. It was as if it had shut forever between him and his own.

But even with this threatened calamity looming before her, the old Indian mother's hurt heart swelled with a certain pride in his wilful actions.

"What bravery!" she exclaimed. "What courage to hold to his own choice! What a *man!*"

"Yes," half bemoaned his father, "he is a red

man through and through. He defies his whole nation in his fearlessness, his lawlessness. Even I bow to his bravery, his self-will, but that bravery is hurting me here, here!" and the ancient chief laid his hand above his heart.

There was no reply to be made by the proud though pained mother. She folded her "broadcloth" about her, filled her small carven pipe and sat for many hours smoking silently, silently, silently. Now and again she shook her head mournfully, but her dark eyes would flash at times with an emotion that contradicted her dejected attitude. It was an emotion born of self-exaltation, for had she not mothered a *man?* —albeit that manhood was revealing itself in scorning the traditions and customs of her ancient race.

And young George was returning from his father's house to the Mission with equally mixed emotions. He knew he had dealt an almost unforgivable blow to those beloved parents whom he had honored and obeyed from his babyhood. Once he almost turned back. Then a vision arose of a fair young English girl whose unhappy childhood he had learned of years ago, a sweet, homeless face of great beauty, lips that were made for love they had never had, eyes that had already known more of tears than they should have shed in a lifetime. Suppose some other youth should win this girl away from him? Already

several of the young men from the town drove over more frequently than they had cause to. Only the week before he had found her seated at the little old melodeon playing and singing a duet with one of these gallants. He locked his teeth together and strode rapidly through the forest path, with the first full realization that she was the only woman in all the world for him.

Some inevitable force seemed to be driving him towards—circumstances seemed to pave the way to—their ultimate union; even now chance placed her in the path, literally, for as he threaded his way uphill, across the open, and on to the little log bridge which crossed the ravine immediately behind the Mission, he saw her standing at the further side, leaning upon the unpeeled sapling which formed the bridge guard. She was looking into the tiny stream beneath. He made no sound as he approached. Generations of moccasin-shod ancestors had made his own movements swift and silent. Notwithstanding this, she turned, and, with a bright girlish smile, she said:

"I knew you were coming, Chief."

"Why? How?" he asked, accepting his new title from her with a graceful indifference almost beyond his four and twenty years.

"I can hardly say just how—but—" she ended with only a smile. For a full minute he caught

and held her glance. She seemed unable to look away, but her grave, blue English eyes were neither shy nor confident. They just seemed to answer his—then,

"Miss Bestman, will you be my wife?" he asked gently. She was neither surprised nor dismayed, only stood silent, as if she had forgotten the art of speech. "You knew I should ask this some day," he continued, rather rapidly. "This is the day."

"I did not really know—I don't know how I feel—" she began, faltering.

"I did not know how I felt, either, until an hour ago," he explained. "When my father and my mother told me they had arranged my marriage with—"

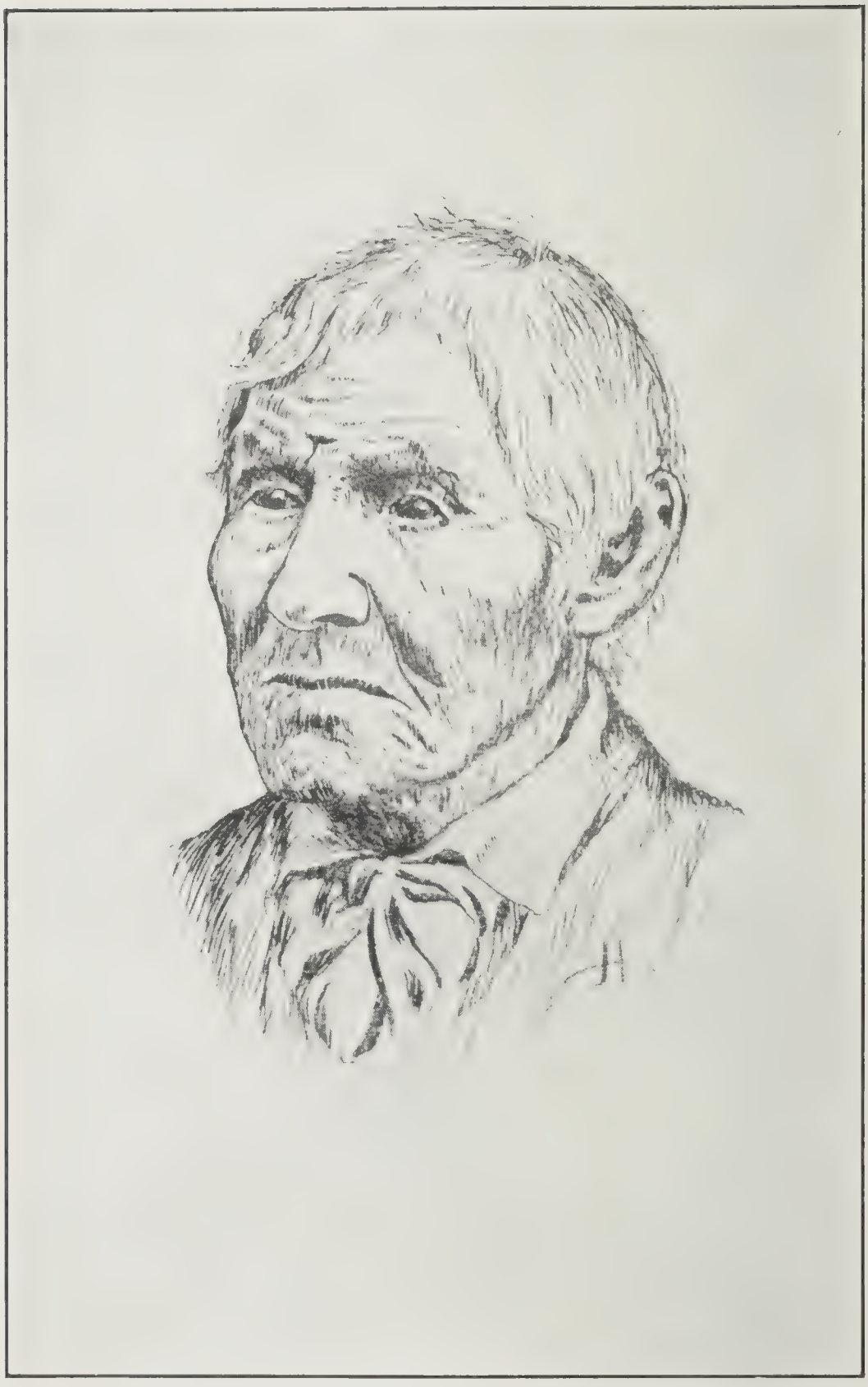
"With whom?" she almost demanded.

"A girl of my own people," he said, grudgingly. "A girl I honor and respect, but—"

"But what?" she said weakly, for the mention of his possible marriage with another had flung her own feelings into her very face.

"But unless you will be my wife, I shall never marry." He folded his arms across his chest as he said it—the very action expressed finality. For a second he stood erect, dark, slender, lithe, immovable, then with sudden impulse he held out one hand to her and spoke very quietly. "I love you, Lydia. Will you come to me?"

"Yes," she answered clearly. "I will come."



Miss Johnson's Mohawk Grandfather

Who was for forty years Speaker of the Council of the Six Nations Confederation. Fought for the British at Queenston Heights.

He caught her hands very tightly, bending his head until his fine face rested against her hair. She knew then that she had loved him through all these years, and that come what might, she would love him through all the years to be.

That night she told her frail and fading sister, whom she found alone resting among her pillows.

"'Liza dear, you are crying," she half sobbed in alarm, as the great tears rolled slowly down the wan cheeks. "I have made you unhappy, and you are ill, too. Oh, how selfish I am! I did not think that perhaps it might distress you."

"Liddy, Liddy darling, these are the only tears of joy that I have ever shed!" cried Elizabeth. "Joy, joy, girlie! I have so wished this to come before I left you, wished it for years. I love George Mansion better than I ever loved brother of mine. Of all the world I should have chosen him for your husband. Oh! I am happy, happy, child, and you will be happy with him, too."

And that night Lydia Bestman laid her down to rest, with her heart knowing the greatest human love that had ever entered into her life.

Mr. Evans was almost beside himself with joyousness when the young people rather shyly confessed their engagement to him. He was deeply attached to his wife's young sister, and George Mansion had been more to him than many

a man's son ever is. Seemingly cold and undemonstrative, this reserved Scotch missionary had given all his heart and life to the Indians, and this one boy was the apple of his eye. Farsighted and cautious, he saw endless trouble shadowing the young lovers—opposition to the marriage from both sides of the house. He could already see Lydia's family smarting under the seeming disgrace of her marriage to an Indian; he could see George's family indignant and hurt to the core at his marriage with a white girl; he could see how impossible it would be for Lydia's people to ever understand the fierce resentment of the Indian parents that the family title could never continue under the family name. He could see how little George's people would ever understand the "white" prejudice against them. But the good man kept his own counsel, determining only that when the war did break out, he would stand shoulder to shoulder with these young lovers and be their friend and helper when even their own blood and kin should cut them off.

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It was two years before this shy and taciturn man fully realized what the young chief and the English girl really were to him, for affliction had laid a heavy hand on his heart. First, his gentle and angel-natured wife said her long, last goodnight to him. Then an unrelenting scourge of

scarlet fever swept three of his children into graves. Then the eldest, just on the threshold of sweet young maidenhood, faded like a flower, until she, too, said good-night and slept beside her mother. Wifeless, childless, the stricken missionary hugged to his heart these two—George and Lydia—and they, who had labored weeks and months, night and day, nursing and tending these loved ones, who had helped fight and grapple with death five times within two years, only to be driven back heartsore and conquered by the enemy—these two put away the thought of marriage for the time. Joy would have been ill-fitting in that household. Youth was theirs, health was theirs, and duty also was theirs—duty to this man of God, whose house was their home, whose hand had brought them together. So the marriage did not take place at once, but the young chief began making preparations on the estate he had purchased to build a fitting home for this homeless girl who was giving her life into his hands. After so many dark days, it was a relief to get Mr. Evans interested in the plans of the house George was to build, to select the proper situation, to arrange for a barn, a carriage house, a stable, for young Mansion had saved money and acquired property of sufficient value to give his wife a home that would vie with anything in the large border towns. Like most Indians, he was recklessly extravagant, and

many a time the thrifty Scotch blood of the missionary would urge more economy, less expenditure. But the building went on; George determined it was to be a "Grand Mansion." His very title demanded that he give his wife an abode worthy of the ancestors who appropriated the name as their own.

"When you both go from me, even if it is only across the fields to the new home, I shall be very much alone," Mr. Evans had once said. Then in an agony of fear that his solitary life would shadow their happiness, he added quickly, " But I have a very sweet and lovely niece who writes me she will come to look after this desolated home if I wish it, and perhaps her brother will come, too, if I want him. I am afraid I *shall* want him sorely, George. For though you will be but five minutes walk from me, your face will not be at my breakfast table to help me begin each day with a courage it has always inspired. So I beg that you two will not delay your marriage; give no thought to me. You are young but once, and youth has wings of wonderful swiftness. Margaret and Christopher shall come to me; but although they are my own flesh and blood, they will never become to me what you two have been, and always will be."

Within their recollection, the lovers had never heard the missionary make so long a speech. They felt the earnestness of it, the truth of it,

and arranged to be married when the golden days of August came. Lydia was to go to her married sister, in the eastern part of Canada, whose husband was a clergyman, and at whose home she had spent many of her girlhood years. George was to follow. They were to be quietly married and return by sailing vessel up the lakes, then take the stage from what is now the city of Toronto, arrive at the Indian Reserve, and go direct to the handsome home the young chief had erected for his English bride. So Lydia Bestman set forth on her long journey from which she was to return as the wife of the head chief of a powerful tribe of Indians—a man revered, respected, looked up to by a vast nation, a man of sterling worth, of considerable wealth as riches were counted in those days, a man polished in the usages and etiquette of her own people, who conducted himself with faultless grace, who would have shone brilliantly in any drawing-room (and who in after years was the guest of honor at many a great reception by the governors of the land), a man young, stalwart, handsome, with an aristocratic lineage that bred him a native gentleman, with a grand old title that had come down to him through six hundred years of honor in warfare and the high places of his people. That this man should be despised by her relatives and family connections because of his warm, red skin and Indian blood, never

occurred to Lydia. Her angel sister had loved the youth, the old Scotch missionary little short of adored him. Why, then, this shocked amazement of her relatives, that she should wish to wed the finest gentleman she had ever met, the man whose love and kindness had made her erstwhile blackened and cruel world a paradise of sunshine and contentment? She was but little prepared for the storm of indignation that met her announcement that she was engaged to marry a Mohawk Indian chief.

Her sister, with whom she never had anything in common, who was years older, and had been married in England when Lydia was but three years of age, implored, entreated, sneered, ridiculed and stormed. Lydia sat motionless through it all, and then the outraged sister struck a vital spot with: "I don't know what Elizabeth has been thinking of all these years, to let you associate with Indians on an equality. *She* is to blame for this."

Then and only then, did Lydia blaze forth. "Don't you *dare* speak of 'Liza like that!" flung the girl. "She was the only human being in our whole family, the only one who ever took me in her arms, who ever called me 'dear,' who ever kissed me as if she meant it. I tell you, she loved George Mansion better than she loved her cold, chilly English brothers. She loved *me,* and her house was my home, which yours never was

Yes, she loved me, angel girl that she was, and she died in a halo of happiness because I was happy and because I was to marry the noblest, kingliest gentleman I ever met." The girl ceased, breathless.

"Yes," sneered her sister, "yes, marry an *Indian!*"

"Yes," defied Lydia, "an *Indian,* who can give me not only a better home than this threadbare parsonage of yours"—here she swept scornful eyes about the meagre little, shabby room—"yes, a home that any Bestman would be proud to own; but better than that," she continued raggingly, "he has given me love—*love,* that you in your chilly, inhuman home sneer at, but that I have cried out for; love that my dead mother prayed should come to me, from the moment she left me a baby, alone, in England, until the hour when this one splendid man took me into his heart."

"Poor mother!" sighed the sister. "I am grateful she is spared *this.*"

"Don't think that she doesn't know it!" cried Lydia. "If 'Liza approved, mother does, and she is glad of her child's happiness."

"Her child—yes, her child," taunted the sister. "Child! child! Yes, and what of the *child* you will probably mother?"

The crimson swept painfully down the young girl's face, but she braved it out.

"Yes," she stammered, "a child, perhaps a *son*, a son of mine, who, poor boy, can never inherit his father's title."

"And why not, pray?" remarked her sister.

"Because the female line of lineage will be broken," explained the girl. "He *should* marry someone else, so that the family title could follow the family name. His father and mother have practically cast him off because of me. *Don't* you see? Can't you understand that I am only an untitled commoner to his people? I am only a white girl."

"*Only* a white girl!" repeated the sister, sarcastically. "Do you mean to tell me that you believe these wretched Indians don't want him to marry you? *You,* a *Bestman,* and an English girl? Nonsense, Lydia! You are talking utter nonsense." But the sister's voice weakened, nevertheless.

"But it's true," asserted the girl. "You don't understand the Indian nation as 'Liza did; it's perfectly true—a son of mine can claim no family title; the honor of it must leave the name of Mansion forever. Oh, his parents have completely shut him out of their lives because I am only a white girl!" and the sweet young voice trembled woefully.

"I decline to discuss this disgraceful matter with you any further," said the sister coldly. "Perhaps my good husband can bring you to

your senses," and the lady left the room in a fever of indignation.

But her "good husband," the city clergyman, declined the task of "bringing Lydia to her senses." He merely sent for her to go to his study, and, as she stood timidly in the doorway, he set his small steely eyes on her and said:

"You will leave this house at once, to-night. *To-night*, do you hear? I'll have no Indian come *here* after my wife's sister. I hope you quite understand me?"

"Quite, sir," replied the girl, and with a stiff bow she turned and went back to her room.

In the haste of packing up her poor and scanty wardrobe, she heard her sister's voice saying to the clergyman: "Oh! how *could* you send her away? You know she has no home, she has nowhere to go. How *could* you do it?" All Lydia caught of his reply was: "Not another night, not another meal, in this house while *I* am its master."

Presently her sister came upstairs carrying a plate of pudding. Her eyes were red with tears, and her hands trembled. "Do eat this, my dear; some tea is coming presently," she said.

But Lydia only shook her head, strapped her little box, and, putting on her bonnet, she commanded her voice sufficiently to say: "I am going now. I'll send for this box later."

"Where are you going to?" her sister's voice trembled.

"I—don't know," said the girl. "But wherever I do go, it will be a kindlier place than this. Good-bye, sister." She kissed the distressed wife softly on each cheek, then paused at the bedroom door to say, "The man I am to marry loves me, honors me too much to treat me as a mere possession. I know that *he* will never tell me he is 'master.' George Mansion may have savage blood in his veins, but he has grasped the meaning of the word 'Christianity' far more fully than your husband has."

Her sister could not reply, but stood with streaming eyes and watched the girl slip down the back stairs and out of a side door.

For a moment Lydia Bestman stood on the pavement and glanced up and down the street. The city was what was known as a garrison town in the days when the British regular troops were quartered in Canada. Far down the street two gay young officers were walking, their brilliant uniforms making a pleasant splash of color in the sunlight. They seemed to suggest to the girl's mind a more than welcome thought. She knew the major's wife well, a gracious, whole-souled English lady whose kindness had oftentimes brightened her otherwise colorless life. Instinctively the girl turned to the quarters of the married officers. She found the major's wife at home, and, burying her drawn little face in the good lady's lap, she poured forth her entire story.

"My dear," blazed out the usually placid lady, "if I were only the major for a few moments, instead of his wife, I should—I should—well, I should just *swear!* There, now I've said it, and I'd *do* it, too. Why, I never heard of such an outrage! My dear, kiss me, and tell me—when, how, do you expect your young chief to come for you?"

"Next week," said the girl, from the depths of those sheltering arms.

"Then here you stay, right here with me. The major and I shall go to the church with you, see you safely married, bring you and your Hiawatha home for a cosy little breakfast, put you aboard the boat for Toronto, and give you both our blessing and our love." And the major's wife nodded her head with such emphasis that her quaint English curls bobbed about, setting Lydia off into a fit of laughter. "That's right, my dear. You just begin to laugh now, and keep it up for all the days to come. I'll warrant you've had little of laughter in your young life," she said knowingly. "From what I've known of your father, he never ordered laughter as a daily ingredient in his children's food. Then that sweet Elizabeth leaving you alone, so terribly alone, must have chased the sunshine far from your little world. But after this," she added brightly, "it's just going to be love and laughter. And now, my dear, we must get back the rosy

English color in your cheeks, or your young Hiawatha won't know his little white sweetheart. Run away to my spare room, girlie. The orderly will get a man to fetch your box. Then you can change your frock. Leave yesterday behind you forever. Have a little rest; you look as if you had not slept for a week. Then join the major and me at dinner, and we'll toast you and your redskin lover in true garrison style."

And Lydia, with the glorious recuperation of youth, ran joyously upstairs, smiling and singing like a lark, transformed with the first unadulterated happiness she had ever felt or known.

## PART III.

Upon George Mansion's arrival at the garrison town he had been met on the wharf by the major, who took him to the hotel, while hurriedly explaining just why he must not go near Lydia's sister and the clergyman whom George had expected would perform the marriage ceremony. "So," continued the major, "you and Lydia are not to be married at the cathedral after all, but Mrs. Harold and I have arranged that the ceremony shall take place at little St. Swithin's Church in the West End. So you'll be there at eleven o'clock, eh, boy?"

"Yes, major, I'll be there, and before eleven, I'm afraid, I'm so anxious to take her home. I shall not endeavor to thank you and Mrs. Harold for what you have done for my homeless girl. I can't even—"

"Tut, tut, tut!" growled the major. "Haven't done anything. Bless my soul, Chief, take my word for it, haven't done a thing to be thanked for. Here's your hotel. Get some coffee to brace your nerves up with, for I can assure you, boy, a wedding is a trying ordeal, even if there is but a handful of folks to see it through. Be a good boy, now—good-bye until eleven—St. Swithin's, remember, and God bless you!" and the big-hearted, blustering major was whisked away in his carriage, leaving the young Indian half overwhelmed with his kindness, but as happy as the golden day.

An hour or so later he stood at the hotel door a moment awaiting the cab that was to take him to the church. He was dressed in the height of the fashion of the early fifties—very dark wine broadcloth, the coat shaped tightly to the waist and adorned with a silk velvet collar, a pale lavender, flowered satin waistcoat, a dull white silk stock collar, a bell-shaped black silk hat. He carried his gloves, for throughout his entire life he declared he breathed through his hands, and the wearing of gloves was abhorrent to him. Suddenly a gentleman accosted him with:

"I hear an Indian chief is in town. Going to be married here this morning. Where is the ceremony to take place? Do you know anything of it?"

Like all his race, George Mansion had a subtle sense of humor. It seized upon him now.

"Certainly I know," he replied. "I happened to come down on the boat with the chief. I intend to go to the wedding myself. I understand the ceremony was arranged to be at the cathedral."

"Splendid!" said the gentleman. "And thank you, sir."

Just then the cab arrived. Young Mansion stepped hastily in, nodded good-bye to his acquaintance, and smilingly said in an undertone to the driver, "St. Swithin's Church—and quickly."

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"With this ring I thee wed," he found himself saying to a little figure in a soft grey gown at his side, while a gentle-faced old clergyman in a snowy surplice stood before him, and a square-shouldered, soldierly person in a brilliant uniform almost hugged his elbow.

"I pronounce you man and wife." At the words she turned towards her husband like a carrier pigeon winging for home. Then somehow the solemnity all disappeared. The major,

the major's wife, two handsome young officers, one girl friend, the clergyman, the clergyman's wife, were all embracing her, and she was dimpling with laughter and happiness; and George Mansion stood proudly by, his fine dark face eager, tender and very noble.

"My dear," whispered the major's wife, "he's a perfect prince—he's just as royal as he can be! I never saw such manners, such ease. Why, girlie, he's a courtier!"

"Confound the young rogue!" growled the major, in her ear. "I haven't an officer on my staff that can equal him. You're a lucky girl. Yes, confound him, I say!"

"Bless you, child," said the clergyman's wife. "I think he'll make you happy. Be very sure that you make *him* happy."

And to all these whole-hearted wishes and comments, Lydia replied with smiles and carefree words. Then came the major, watch in hand, military precision and promptitude in his very tone.

"Time's up, everybody! There's a bite to eat at the barracks, then these youngsters must be gone. The boat is due at one o'clock—time's up."

As the little party drove past the cathedral they observed a huge crowd outside, waiting for the doors to be opened. Lydia laughed like a child as George told her of his duplicity of the

morning, when he had misled the inquiring stranger into thinking the Indian chief was to be married there. The little tale furnished fun for all at the pretty breakfast in the major's quarters.

"Nice way to begin your wedding morning, young man!" scowled the major, fiercely. "Starting this great day with a network of falsehoods."

"Not at all," smiled the Indian. "It was arranged for the cathedral, and I did attend the ceremony."

"No excuses, you bare-faced scoundrel! I won't listen to them. Here you are happily married, and all those poor would-be sight-seers sizzling out there in this glaring August sun. I'm ashamed of you!" But his arm was about George's shoulders, and he was wringing the dark, slender hand with a genuine good fellowship that was pleasant to see. "Bless my soul, I love you, boy!" he added, sincerely. "Love you through and through; and remember, I'm your white father from this day forth."

"And I am your white mother," said the major's wife, placing her hands on his shoulders.

For a second the bridegroom's face sobered. Before him flashed a picture of a little old Indian woman with a broadcloth folded about her shoulders, a small carven pipe between her lips, a world of sorrow in her deep eyes—sorrow that he had brought there. He bent suddenly and

kissed Mrs. Harold's fingers with a grave and courtly deference. "Thank you," he said simply.

But motherlike, she knew that his heart was bleeding. Lydia had told of his parents' antagonism, of the lost Mansion title. So the good lady just gave his hand a little extra, understanding squeeze, and the good-byes began.

"Be off with you, youngsters!" growled the major. "The boat is in—poste haste now, or you'll miss it. Begone, both of you!"

And presently they found themselves once more in the carriage, the horses galloping down to the wharf. And almost before they realized it they were aboard, with the hearty "God bless you's" of the splendid old major and his lovable wife still echoing in their happy young hearts.

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It was evening, five days later, when they arrived at their new home. All about the hills, and the woods, above the winding river, and along the edge of the distant forest, brooded that purple smokiness that haunts the late days of August—the smokiness that was born of distant fires, where the Indians and pioneers were "clearing" their lands. The air was like amethyst, the setting sun a fire opal. As on the day when she first had come into his life, George helped her to alight from the carriage, and they stood a moment, hand in hand, and looked over the

ample acres that composed their estate. The young Indian had worked hard to have most of the land cleared, leaving here and there vast stretches of walnut groves, and long lines of majestic elms, groups of sturdy oaks, and occasionally a single regal pine tree. Many a time in later years his utilitarian friends would say, "Chief, these trees you are preserving so jealously are eating up a great deal of your land. Why not cut them away and grow wheat?" But he would always resent the suggestion, saying that his wheat lands lay back from the river. They were for his body, doubtless, but here, by the river, the trees must be—they were for his soul. And Lydia would champion him immediately with, "Yes, they were there to welcome me as a bride, those grand old trees, and they will remain there, I think, as long as we both shall live." So, that first evening at home they stood and watched the imperial trees, the long, open flats bordering the river, the nearby lawns which he had taken such pains to woo from the wilderness; stood palm to palm, and that moment seemed to govern all their after life.

Someone has said that never in the history of the world have two people been perfectly mated. However true this may be, it is an undeniable fact that between the most devoted of life-mates there will come inharmonious moments. Individuality would cease to exist were it not so.

These two lived together for upwards of thirty years, and never had one single quarrel, but oddly enough, when the rare inharmonious moments came, these groups of trees bridged the fleeting difference of opinion or any slight antagonism of will and purpose; when these unresponsive moments came, one or the other would begin to admire those forest giants, to suggest improvements, to repeat the admiration of others for their graceful outlines—to, in fact, direct thought and conversation into the common channel of love for those trees. This peculiarity was noticeable to outsiders, to their own circle, to their children. At mere mention of the trees the shadow of coming cloud would lessen, then waste, then grow invisible. Their mutual love for these voiceless yet voiceful and kingly creations was as the love of children for a flower—simple, nameless, beautiful and powerful beyond words.

That first home night, as she stepped within doors, there awaited two inexpressible surprises for her. First, on the dining-room table a silver tea service of seven pieces, imported from England—his wedding gift to her. Second, in the quaint little drawing-room stood a piano. In the "early fifties" this latter was indeed a luxury, even in city homes. She uttered a little cry of delight, and flinging herself before the instrument, ran her fingers over the keys, and broke

into his favorite song, "Oft in the Stilly Night." She had a beautiful voice, the possession of which would have made her renowned had opportunity afforded its cultivation. She had "picked up" music and read it remarkably well, and he, Indian wise, was passionately fond of melody. So they laughed and loved together over this new luxurious toy, until Milly, the ancient Mohawk maid, tapped softly at the drawing-room and bade them come to tea. With that first meal in her new home, the darkened hours and days and years smothered their haunting voices. She had "left yesterday behind her," as the major's royal wife had wished her to, and for the first time in all her checkered and neglected life she laughed with the gladness of a bird at song, flung her past behind her, and the grim unhappiness of her former life left her forever.

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It was a golden morning in July when the doctor stood grasping George Mansion's slender hands, searching into his dusky, anxious eyes, and saying with ringing cheeriness, "Chief, I congratulate you. You've got the most beautiful son upstairs—the finest boy I ever saw. Hail to the young chief, I say!"

The doctor was white. He did not know of the broken line of lineage—that "the boy upstairs" could never wear his father's title. A

swift shadow fought for a second with glorious happiness. The battlefield was George Mansion's face, his heart. His unfilled duty to his parents assailed him like a monstrous enemy, then happiness conquered, came forth a triumphant victor, and the young father dashed noiselessly, fleetly up the staircase, and, despite the protesting physician, in another moment his wife and son were in his arms. Titles did not count in that moment; only Love in its tyrannical majesty reigned in that sacred room.

The boy was a being of a new world, a new nation. Before he was two weeks old he began to show the undeniable physique of the two great races from whence he came; all the better qualities of both bloods seemed to blend within his small body. He was his father's son, he was his mother's baby. His grey-blue eyes held a hint of the dreaming forest, but also a touch of old England's skies. His hair, thick and black, was straight as his father's, except just above the temples, where a suggestion of his mother's pretty English curls waved like strands of fine silk. His small mouth was thin-lipped; his nose, which even in babyhood never had the infantile "snub," but grew straight, thin as his Indian ancestors', yet displayed a half-haughty English nostril; his straight little back—all combined likenesses to his parents. But who could say which blood dominated his tiny person? Only

the exquisite soft, pale brown of his satiny skin called loudly and insistently that he was of a race older than the composite English could ever boast; it was the hallmark of his ancient heritage—the birthright of his father's son.

But the odd little half-blood was extraordinarily handsome even as an infant. In after years when he grew into glorious manhood he was generally acknowledged to be the handsomest man in the Province of Ontario, but to-day—his first day in these strange, new surroundings—he was but a wee, brown, lovable bundle, whose tiny gossamer hands cuddled into his father's palm, while his little velvet cheek lay rich and russet against the pearly whiteness of his mother's arm.

"I believe he is like you, George," she murmured, with a wealth of love in her voice and eyes.

"Yes," smiled the young chief, "he certainly has Mansion blood; but your eyes, Lydia, your dear eyes."

"Which eyes must go to sleep and rest," interrupted the physician, severely. "Come, Chief, you've seen your son, you've satisfied yourself that Mrs. Mansion is doing splendidly, so away you go, or I shall scold."

And George slipped away after one more embrace, slipped down the staircase, and out into the radiant July sunshine, where his beloved

trees arose about him, grand and majestic, seeming to understand how full of joy, of exultation, had been this great new day.

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The whims of women are proverbial, but the whims of men are things never to be accounted for. This beautiful child was but a few weeks old when Mr. Bestman wrote, announcing to his daughter his intention of visiting her for a few days.

So he came to the Indian Reserve, to the handsome country home his Indian son-in-law had built. He was amazed, surprised, delighted. His English heart revelled in the trees. "Like an Old Country gentleman's estate in the Counties," he declared. He kissed his daughter with affection, wrung his son-in-law's hand with a warmth and cordiality unmistakable in its sincerity, took the baby in his arms and said over and over, "Oh, you sweet little child! You sweet little child!" Then the darkness of all those harsh years fell away from Lydia. She could afford to be magnanimous, so with a sweet silence, a loving forgetfulness of all the dead miseries and bygone whip-lashes, she accepted her strange parent just as he presented himself, in the guise of a man whom the years had changed from harshness to tenderness, and let herself thoroughly enjoy his visit.

But when he drove away she had but one thing to say; it was, "George, I wonder when *your* father will come to us, when your *mother* will come. Oh, I want her to see the baby, for I think my own mother sees him."

"Some day, dear," he answered hopefully. "They will come some day; and when they do, be sure it will be to take you to their hearts."

She sighed and shook her head unbelievingly. But the "some day" that he prophesied, but which she doubted, came in a manner all too soon—all too unwelcome. The little son had just begun to walk about nicely, when George Mansion was laid low with a lingering fever that he had contracted among the marshes where much of his business as an employee of the Government took him. Evils had begun to creep into his forest world. The black and subtle evil of the white man's firewater had commenced to touch with its poisonous finger the lives and lodges of his beloved people. The curse began to spread, until it grew into a menace to the community. It was the same old story: the white man had come with the Bible in one hand, the bottle in the other. George Mansion had striven side by side with Mr. Evans to overcome the dread scourge. Together they fought the enemy hand to hand, but it gained ground in spite of all their efforts. The entire plan of the white liquor dealer's campaign was simply an effort to

exchange a quart of bad whiskey for a cord of first-class firewood, or timber, which could be hauled off the Indian Reserve and sold in the nearby town markets for five or six dollars; thus a hundred dollars worth of bad whisky, if judiciously traded, would net the white dealer a thousand dollars cash. And the traffic went on, to the depletion of the Indian forests and the degradation of the Indian souls.

Then the Canadian Government appointed young Mansion special forest warden, gave him a "V. R." hammer, with which he was to stamp each and every stick of timber he could catch being hauled off the Reserve by white men; licensed him to carry firearms for self-protection, and told him to "go ahead." He "went ahead." Night after night he lay, concealing himself in the marshes, the forests, the trails, the concession lines, the river road, the Queen's highway, seizing all the timber he could, destroying all the whisky, turning the white liquor traders off Indian lands, and fighting as only a young, earnest and inspired man can fight. These hours and conditions began to tell on his physique. The marshes breathed their miasma into his blood—the dreaded fever had him in its claws. Lydia was a born nurse. She knew little of thermometers, of charts, of technical terms, but her ability and instincts in the sick-room were unerring; and, when her husband succumbed to a raging

fever, love lent her hands an inspiration and her brain a clarity that would have shamed many a professional nurse.

For hours, days, weeks, she waited, tended, watched, administered, labored and loved beside the sick man's bed. She neither slept nor ate enough to carry her through the ordeal, but love lent her strength, and she battled and fought for his life as only an adoring woman can. Her wonderful devotion was the common talk of the country. She saw no one save Mr. Evans and the doctors. She never left the sick-room save when her baby needed her. But it all seemed so useless, so in vain, when one dark morning the doctor said, "We had better send for his father and mother."

Poor Lydia! Her heart was nearly breaking. She hurriedly told the doctor the cause that had kept them away so long, adding, "Is it so bad as that? Oh, doctor, *must I send for them?* They don't want to come." Before the good man could reply, there was a muffled knock at the door. Then Milly's old wrinkled face peered in, and Milly's voice said whisperingly, "His people—they here."

"Whose people? Who are here?" almost gasped Lydia.

"His father and his mother," answered the old woman. "They downstairs."

For a brief moment there was silence. Lydia could not trust herself to speak, but ill as he

was, George's quick Indian ear had caught Milly's words. He murmured, "Mother! mother! Oh, my mother!"

"Bring her, quickly, *quickly!*" said Lydia to the doctor.

It seemed to the careworn girl that a lifetime followed before the door opened noiselessly, and there entered a slender little old Indian woman, in beaded leggings, moccasins, "short skirt," and a blue "broadcloth" folded about her shoulders. She glanced swiftly at the bed, but with the heroism of her race went first towards Lydia, laid her cheek silently beside the white girl's, then looked directly into her eyes.

"Lydia!" whispered George, "Lydia!" At the word both women moved swiftly to his side. "Lydia," he repeated, "my mother cannot speak the English, but her cheek to yours means that you are her blood relation."

The effort of speech almost cost him a swoon, but his mother's cheek was now against his own, and the sweet, dulcet Mohawk language of his boyhood returned to his tongue; he was speaking it to his mother, speaking it lovingly, rapidly. Yet, although Lydia never understood a word, she did not feel an outsider, for the old mother's hand held her own, and she knew that at last the gulf was bridged.

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It was two days later, when the doctor pronounced George Mansion out of danger, that the

sick man said to his wife: "Lydia, it is all over —the pain, the estrangement. My mother says that you are her daughter. My father says that you are his child. They heard of your love, your nursing, your sweetness. They want to know if you will call them 'father, mother.' They love you, for you are one of their own."

"At last, at last!" half sobbed the weary girl. "Oh, George, I am so happy! *You* are going to get well, and *they* have come to us at last."

"Yes, dear," he replied. Then with a half humorous yet wholly pathetic smile flitting across his wan face, he added, "And my mother has a little gift for you." He nodded then towards the quaint old figure at the further side of the bed. His mother arose, and, drawing from her bosom a tiny, russet-colored object, laid it in Lydia's hand. It was a little moccasin, just three and a quarter inches in length. "Its mate is lost," added the sick man, "but I wore it as a baby. My mother says it is yours, and should have been yours all these years."

For a second the two women faced each other, then Lydia sat down abruptly on the bedside, her arms slipped about the older woman's shoulders, and her face dropped quickly, heavily—at last on a mother's breast.

George Mansion sighed in absolute happiness, then closed his eyes and slept the great, strong, vitalizing sleep of reviving forces.

## PART IV.

How closely the years chased one another after this! But many and many a happy day within each year found Lydia and her husband's mother sitting together, hour upon hour, needle in hand, sewing and harmonizing—the best friends in all the world. It mattered not that "mother" could not speak one word of English, or that Lydia never mastered but a half dozen words of Mohawk. These two were friends in the sweetest sense of the word, and their lives swept forward in a unison of sympathy that was dear to the heart of the man who held them as the two most precious beings in all the world.

And with the years came new duties, new responsibilities, new little babies to love and care for until a family, usually called "A King's Desire," gathered at their hearthside—four children, the eldest a boy, the second a girl, then another boy, then another girl. These children were reared on the strictest lines of both Indian and English principles. They were taught the legends, the traditions, the culture and the etiquette of both races to which they belonged; but above all, their mother instilled into them from the very cradle that they were of their father's people, not of hers. Her marriage had made her an Indian by the laws which govern Canada,

as well as by the sympathies and yearnings and affections of her own heart. When she married George Mansion she had repeated to him the centuries-old vow of allegiance, " Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." She determined that should she ever be mother to his children, those children should be reared as Indians in spirit and patriotism, and in loyalty to their father's race as well as by heritage of blood. The laws of Canada held these children as Indians. They were wards of the Government; they were born on Indian lands, on Indian Reservations. They could own and hold Indian lands, and their mother, English though she was, made it her life service to inspire, foster and elaborate within these children the pride of race, the value of that copper-tinted skin which they all displayed. When people spoke of blood and lineage and nationality, these children would say, " We are Indians," with the air with which a young Spanish don might say, " I am a Castilian." She wanted them to grow up nationalists, and they did, every mother's son and daughter of them. Things could never have been otherwise, for George Mansion and his wife had so much in common that their offspring could scarcely evince other than inherited parental traits. Their tastes and distastes were so synonymous; they hated hypocrisy, vulgarity, slovenliness, imitations.

After forty years spent on a Canadian Indian Reserve, Lydia Mansion still wore real lace, real tortoise shell combs, real furs. If she could not have procured these she would have worn plain linen collars, no combs, and a woven woolen scarf about her throat; but the imitation fabrics, as well as the "imitation people," had no more part in her life than they had in her husband's, who abhorred all such pinchbeck. Their loves were identical. They loved nature—the trees, best of all, and the river, and the birds. They loved the Anglican Church, they loved the British flag, they loved Queen Victoria, they loved beautiful, dead Elizabeth Evans, they loved strange, reticent Mr. Evans. They loved music, pictures and dainty china, with which George Mansion filled his beautiful home. They loved books and animals, but, most of all, these two loved the Indian people, loved their legends, their habits, their customs—loved the people themselves. Small wonder, then, that their children should be born with pride of race and heritage, and should face the world with that peculiar, unconquerable courage that only a fighting ancestry can give.

As the years drifted on, many distinctions came to the little family of the "Grand Mansions." The chief's ability as an orator, his fluency of speech, his ceaseless war against the inroads of the border white men and their lawlessness among his own people—all gradually

but surely brought him, inch by inch, before the notice of those who sat in the "seats of the mighty" of both church and state. His presence was frequently demanded at Ottawa, fighting for the cause of his people before the House of Commons, the Senate, and the Governor-General himself. At such times he would always wear his native buckskin costume, and his amazing rhetoric, augmented by the gorgeous trappings of his office and his inimitable courtesy of manner, won him friends and followers among the lawmakers of the land. He never fought for a cause and lost it, never returned to Lydia and his people except in a triumph of victory. Social honors came to him as well as political distinctions. Once, soon after his marriage, a special review of the British troops quartered at Toronto was called in his honor and he rode beside the general, making a brilliant picture, clad as he was in buckskins and scarlet blanket and astride his pet black pony, as he received the salutes of company after company of England's picked soldiers as they wheeled past. And when King Edward of England visited Canada as Prince of Wales, he fastened with his own royal hands a heavy silver medal to the buckskin covering George Mansion's breast, and the royal words were very sincere as they fell from the prince's lips: "This medal is for recognition of your loyalty in battling for your own people, even as your ancestors battled for the British

Crown." Then in later years, when Prince Arthur of Connaught accepted the title of "Chief," conferred upon him with elaborate ceremony by the chiefs, braves and warriors of the great Iroquois Council, it was George Mansion who was chosen as special escort to the royal visitor—George Mansion and his ancient and honored father, who, hand-in-hand with the young prince, walked to and fro, chanting the impressive ritual of bestowing the title. Even Bismarck, the "Iron Chancellor" of Germany, heard of this young Indian warring for the welfare of his race, and sent a few kindly words, with his own photograph, from across seas to encourage the one who was fighting, single-handed, the menace of white man's greed and white man's firewater.

And Lydia, with her glad and still girlish heart, gloried in her husband's achievements and in the recognition accorded him by the great world beyond the Indian Reserve, beyond the wilderness, beyond the threshold of their own home. In only one thing were their lives at all separated. She took no part in his public life. She hated the glare of the fierce light that beat upon prominent lives, the unrest of fame, the disquiet of public careers.

"No," she would answer, when oftentimes he begged her to accompany him and share his success and honors, "no, I was homeless so long

that 'home' is now my ambition. My babies need me here, and you need me here when you return, far more than you need me on platform or parade. Go forth and fight the enemy, storm the battlements and win the laurels, but let me keep the garrison—here at home, with our babies all about me and a welcome to our warrior husband and father when he returns from war."

Then he would laugh and coax again, but always with the same result. Every day, whether he went forth to the Indian Council across the river, or when more urgent duties called him to the Capital, she always stood at the highest window waving her handkerchief until he was out of sight, and that dainty flag lent strength to his purpose and courage to his heart, for he knew the home citadel was there awaiting his return—knew that she would be at that selfsame window, their children clustered about her skirts, her welcoming hands waving a greeting instead of a good-bye, as soon as he faced the home portals once more, and in his heart of hearts George Mansion felt that his wife had chosen the wiser, greater part; that their children would some day arise and call her blessed because she refused to wing away from the home nest, even if by so doing she left him to take his flights alone.

But in all their world there was no one prouder of his laurels and successes than his

home-loving, little English wife, and the mother-heart of her must be forgiven for welcoming each new honor as a so much greater heritage for their children. Each distinction won by her husband only established a higher standard for their children to live up to. She prayed and hoped and prayed again that they would all be worthy such a father, that they would never fall short of his excellence. To this end she taught, labored for, and loved them, and they, in turn, child-wise, responded to her teaching, imitating her allegiance to their father, reflecting her fealty, and duplicating her actions. So she molded these little ones with the mother-hand that they felt through all their after lives, which were but images of her own in all that concerned their father.

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The first great shadow that fell on this united little circle was when George Mansion's mother quietly folded her "broadcloth" about her shoulders for the last time, when the little old tobacco pipe lay unfilled and unlighted, when the finely-beaded moccasins were empty of the dear feet that had wandered so gently, so silently into the Happy Hunting Grounds. George Mansion was bowed with woe His mother had been to him the queen of all women, and her death left a desolation in his heart that even his wife could not assuage. It was a grief he really never over-

came. Fortunately his mother had grown so attached to Lydia that his one disobedience—that of his marriage—never reproached him. Had the gentle little old Indian woman died before the episode of the moccasin which brought complete reconciliation, it is doubtful if her son would ever have been quite the same again. As it was, with the silence and stoicism of his race he buried his grief in his own heart, without allowing it to cast a gloom over his immediate household.

But after that the ancient chief, his father, came more frequently to George's home, and was always an honored guest. The children loved him, Lydia had the greatest respect and affection for him, the greatest sympathy for his loneliness, and she ever made him welcome and her constant companion when he visited them. He used to talk to her much of George, and once or twice gave her grave warnings as to his recklessness and lack of caution in dealing with the ever-growing menace of the whisky traffic among the Indians. The white men who supplied and traded this liquor were desperadoes, a lawless set of ruffians who for some time had determined to rid their stamping-ground of George Mansion, as he was the chief opponent to their business, and with the way well cleared of him and his unceasing resistance, their scoundrelly trade would be an easy matter.

"Use all your influence, Lydia," the old father would say, "to urge him never to seize the ill-gotten timber or destroy their whisky, unless he has other Indian wardens with him. They'll kill him if they can, those white men. They have been heard to threaten."

For some time this very thing had been crowding its truth about his wife's daily life. Threatening and anonymous letters had more than once been received by her husband—letters that said he would be "put out of the way" unless he stopped interfering in the liquor trade. There was no ignoring the fact that danger was growing daily, that the fervent young chief was allowing his zeal to overcome his caution, was hazarding his life for the protection of his people against a crying evil. Once a writer of these unsigned letters threatened to burn his house down in the dead of night, another to maim his horses and cattle, others to "do away" with him. His crusade was being waged under the weight of a cross that was beginning to fall on his loyal wife, and to overshadow his children. Then one night the blow fell. Blind with blood, crushed and broken, he staggered and reeled home, unaided, unassisted, and in excruciating torture. Nine white men had attacked him from behind in a border village a mile from his home, where he had gone to intercept a load of whisky that was being hauled into the Indian Reserve. Eight

of those lawbreakers circled about him, while the ninth struck him from behind with a leaden plumb attached to an elastic throw-string. The deadly thing crushed in his skull; he dropped where he stood, as if shot. Then brutal boots kicked his face, his head, his back, and, with curses, his assailants left him—for dead.

With a vitality born of generations of warriors, he regained consciousness, staggered the mile to his own gate, where he met a friend, who, with extreme concern, began to assist him into his home. But he refused the helping arm with, "No, I go alone; it would alarm Lydia if I could not walk alone." These, with the few words he spoke as he entered the kitchen, where his wife was overseeing old Milly get the evening meal, were the last intelligent words he spoke for many a day.

"Lydia, they've hurt me at last," he said, gently.

She turned at the sound of his strained voice. A thousand emotions overwhelmed her at the terrifying sight before her. Love, fear, horror, all broke forth from her lips in a sharp, hysterical cry, but above this cry sounded the gay laughter of the children who were playing in the next room, their shrill young voices raised in merriment over some new sport. In a second the mother-heart asserted itself. Their young eyes must not see this ghastly thing.

"Milly!" she cried to the devoted Indian servant, "help Chief George." Then dashing into the next room, she half sobbed, "Children, children! hush, oh, hush! Poor father—"

She never finished the sentence. With a turn of her arm she swept them all into the drawing-room, closed the door, and flew back to her patriot husband.

For weeks and weeks he lay fighting death as only a determined man can—his upper jaw broken on both sides, his lower jaw splintered on one side, his skull so crushed that to the end of his days a silver dollar could quite easily be laid flat in the cavity, a jagged and deep hole in his back, and injuries about the knees and leg bones. And all these weeks Lydia hovered above his pillow, night and day, nursing, tending, helping, cheering. What effort it cost her to be bright and smiling no tongue can tell, for her woman's heart saw that this was but the beginning of the end. She saw it when in his delirium he raved to get better, to be allowed to get up and go on with the fight; saw that his spirit never rested, for fear that, now he was temporarily inactive, the whisky dealers would have their way. She knew then that she must school herself to endure this thing again; that she must never ask him to give up his life work, never be less courageous than he, though that courage would mean never a peaceful moment to her when he was outside their own home.

Mr. Evans was a great comfort to her during those terrible weeks. Hour after hour he would sit beside the injured man, never speaking or moving, only watching quietly, while Lydia barely snatched the necessary sleep a nurse must have, or attended to the essential needs of the children, who, however, were jealously cared for by faithful Milly. During those times the children never spoke except in whispers, their rigid Indian-English training in self-effacement and obedience being now of untold value.

But love and nursing and bravery all counted in the end, and one day George Mansion walked downstairs, the doctor's arm on one side, Lydia's on the other. He immediately asked for his pistol and his dagger, cleaned the one, oiled and sharpened the other, and said, " I'll be ready for them again in a month's time."

But while he lay injured his influential white friends and the Government at Ottawa had not been idle. The lawless creature who dealt those unmerited blows was tried, convicted and sent to Kingston Penitentiary for seven years. So one enemy was out of the way for the time being. It was at this time that advancing success lost him another antagonist, who was placed almost in the rank of an ally.

George Mansion was a guest of the bishop of his diocese, as he was a lay delegate accompanying Mr. Evans to the Anglican Synod. The

chief's work had reached other ears than those of the Government at Ottawa, and the bishop was making much of the patriot, when in the See House itself an old clergyman approached him with outstretched hand and the words, "I would like you to call bygones just bygones."

"I don't believe I have the honor of knowing you, sir," replied the Indian, with a puzzled but gracious look.

"I am your wife's brother-in-law," said the old clergyman, "the man who would not allow her to be married from my house—that is, married to *you*."

The Indian bit his lip and instinctively stepped backward. Added to his ancestral creed of never forgiving such injury, came a rush of memory—the backward-surging picture of his homeless little sweetheart and all that she had endured. Then came the memory of his dead mother's teaching—teaching she had learned from her own mother, and she in turn from her mother: "Always forget yourself for *old* people, always honor the *old*."

Instantly George Mansion arose—arose above the prejudices of his blood, above the traditions of his race, arose to the highest plane a man can reach—the memory of his mother's teaching.

"I would hardly be here as a lay delegate of my church were I not willing to let bygones be bygones," he said, simply, and laid his hand in

that of the old clergyman, about whose eyes there was moisture, perhaps because this opportunity for peacemaking had come so tardily.

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The little family of the "Grand Mansions" were now growing to very "big childhood," and the inevitable day came when Lydia's heart must bear the wrench of having her firstborn say good-bye to take his college course. She was not the type of mother who would keep the boy at home because of the heartache the good-byes must bring, but the parting was certainly a hard one, and she watched his going with a sense of loss that was almost greater than her pride in him. He had given evidence of the most remarkable musical talent. He played classical airs even before he knew a note, and both his parents were in determined unison about this talent being cultivated. The following year the oldest daughter also entered college, having had a governess at home for a year, as some preparation. But these changes brought no difference into the home, save that George Mansion's arm grew stronger daily in combat against the old foe. Then came the second attack of the enemy, when six white men beset him from behind, again knocking him insensible, with a heavy blue beech hand-spike. They broke his hand and three ribs, knocked out his teeth, injured his side and

head; then seizing his pistol, shot at him, the ball fortunately not reaching a vital spot. As his senses swam he felt them drag his poor maimed body into the middle of the road, so it would appear as if horses had trampled him, then he heard them say, "*This* time the devil is dead." But hours afterwards he again arose, again walked home, five interminable miles, again greeted his ever watchful and anxious wife with, "Lydia, they've hurt me once more." Then came weeks of renewed suffering, of renewed care and nursing, of renewed vitality, and at last of conquered health.

These two terrible illnesses seemed to raise Lydia into a peculiar, half-protecting attitude towards him. In many ways she "mothered" him almost as though he were her son—he who had always been the leader, and so strong and self-reliant. After this, when he went forth on his crusades, she watched his going with the haunting fear with which one would watch a child wandering on the edge of a chasm. She waited on him when he returned, served him with the tenderness with which one serves a cripple or a baby. Once he caught her arm, as she carried to him a cup of broth, after he had spent wearisome hours at the same old battle, and turning towards her, said softly: "You are like my mother used to be to me." She did not ask him in what way—she knew—and carried

broth to him when next he came home half exhausted. Gradually he now gathered about him a little force of zealous Indians who became enthusiastic to take up arms with him against the whisky dealers. He took greater precautions in his work, for the growing mist of haunting anxiety in Lydia's eyes began to call to him that there were other claims than those of the nation. His splendid zeal had brought her many a sleepless night, when she knew he was scouring the forests for hidden supplies of the forbidden merchandise, and that a whole army of desperadoes would not deter him from fulfilling his duty of destroying it. He felt, rather than saw, that she never bade him good-bye but that she was prepared not to see him again alive. Added to this he began to suffer as she did—to find that in his good-byes was the fear of never seeing her again. He, who had always been so fearless, was now afraid of the day when he should not return and she would be once more alone.

So he let his younger and eager followers do some of the battling, though he never relaxed his vigilance, never took off his armor, so to speak. But now he spent long days and quiet nights with Lydia and his children. They entertained many guests, for the young people were vigorous and laughter-loving, and George and Lydia never grew old, never grew weary, never grew commonplace. All the year round guests

came to the hospitable country house—men and women of culture, of learning, of artistic tastes, of congenial habits. Scientists, authors, artists, all made their pilgrimages to this unique household, where refinement and much luxury, and always a glad welcome from the chief and his English wife, made their visits long remembered. And in some way or other, as their children grew up, those two seemed to come closer together once more. They walked among the trees they had loved in those first bridal days, they rested by the river shore, they wandered over the broad meadows and bypaths of the old estate, they laughed together frequently like children, and always and ever talked of and acted for the good of the Indian people who were so unquestionably the greatest interest in their lives, outside their own children. But one day, when the beautiful estate he was always so proud of was getting ready to smile under the suns of spring, he left her just when she needed him most, for their boys had plunged forward into the world of business in the large cities, and she wanted a strong arm to lean on. It was the only time he failed to respond to her devoted nursing, but now she could not bring him back from the river's brink, as she had so often done before. Cold had settled in all the broken places of his poor body, and he slipped away from her, a sacrifice to his fight against evil on the altar of his nation's good. In

his feverish wanderings he returned to the tongue of his childhood, the beautiful, dulcet Mohawk. Then recollecting and commanding himself, he would weakly apologize to Lydia with: "I forgot; I thought it was my mother," and almost his last words were, "It must be by my mother's side," meaning his resting-place. So his valiant spirit went fearlessly forth.

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"Do you ever think, dear," said Lydia to her youngest child, some years later, "that you are writing the poetry that always lived in an unexpressed state here in my breast?"

"No, Marmee," answered the girl, who was beginning to mount the ladder of literature, "I never knew you wanted to *write* poetry, although I knew you loved it."

"Indeed, I did," answered the mother, "but I never could find expression for it. I was made just to sing, I often think, but I never had the courage to sing in public. But I did want to write poetry, and now you, dear, are doing it for me. How proud your father would have been of you!"

"Oh, he knows! I'm sure he knows all that I have written," answered the girl, with the sublime faith that youth has in its own convictions. "And if you like my verses, Marmee, I am sure he does, for he knows."

"Perhaps," murmured the older woman. "I often feel that he is very near to us. I never have felt that he is really gone very far away from me."

"Poor little Marmee!" the girl would say to herself. "She misses him yet. I believe she will always miss him."

Which was the truth. She saw constantly his likeness in all her children, bits of his character, shades of his disposition, reflections of his gifts and talents, hints of his bravery, and she always spoke of these with a commending air, as though they were characteristics to be cultivated, to be valued and fostered.

At first her fear of leaving her children, even to join him, was evident, she so believed in a mother's care and love being a necessity to a child. She had sadly missed it all out of her own strange life, and she felt she *must* live until this youngest daughter grew to be a woman. Perhaps this desire, this mother-love, kept her longer beside her children than she would have stayed without it, for the years rolled on, and her hair whitened, her once springing step halted a little, the glorious blue of her English eyes grew very dreamy, and tender, and wistful. Was she seeing the great Hereafter unfold itself before her as her steps drew nearer and nearer?

And one night the Great Messenger knocked softly at her door, and with a sweet, gentle sigh

she turned and followed where he led—joining gladly the father of her children in the land that holds both whites and Indians as one.

And the daughter who writes the verses her mother always felt, but found no words to express, never puts a last line to a story, or a sweet cadence into a poem, but she says to herself as she holds her mother's memory within her heart:

"She knows—she knows."

Crow's Nest Pass.

# Catharine of the "Crow's Nest"

THE great transcontinental railway had been in running order for years before the managers thereof decided to build a second line across the Rocky Mountains. But "passes" are few and far between in those gigantic fastnesses, and the fearless explorers, followed by the equally fearless surveyors, were many a toilsome month conquering the heights, depths and dangers of the "Crow's Nest Pass."

Eastward stretched the gloriously fertile plains of southern "Sunny Alberta," westward lay the limpid blue of the vast and indescribably beautiful Kootenay Lakes, but between these two arose a barrier of miles and miles of granite and stone and rock, over and through which a railway must be constructed. Tunnels, bridges, grades must be bored, built and blasted out. It was the work of science, endurance and indomitable courage. The summers in the cañons were seething hot, the winters in the mountains perishingly cold, with apparently inexhaustible

snow clouds circling forever about the rugged peaks—snows in which many a good, honest laborer was lost until the eagles and vultures came with the April thaws, and wheeled slowly above the pulseless sleeper, if indeed the wolves and mountain lions had permitted him to lie thus long unmolested. Those were rough and rugged days, through which equally rough and rugged men served and suffered to find foundations whereon to lay those two threads of steel that now cling like a cobweb to the walls of the wonderful "gap" known as Crow's Nest Pass.

Work progressed steadily, and before winter set in construction camps were built far into "the gap," the furthermost one being close to the base of a majestic mountain, which was also named "The Crow's Nest." It arose beyond the camp with almost overwhelming immensity. Dense forests of Douglas fir and bull pines shouldered their way up one-third of its height, but above the timber line the shaggy, bald rock reared itself thousands of feet skyward, desolate, austere and deserted by all living things; not even the sure-footed mountain goat travelled up those frowning, precipitous heights; no bird rested its wing in that frozen altitude. The mountain arose, distinct, alone, isolated, the most imperial monarch of all that regal Pass.

The construction gang called it "Old Baldy," for after working some months around its base,

it began to grow into their lives. Not so, however, with the head engineer from Montreal, who regarded it always with baleful eye, and half laughingly, half seriously, called it his "Jonah."

"Not a thing has gone right since we worked in sight of that old monster," he was heard to say frequently; and it did seem as if there were some truth in it. There had been deaths, accidents and illness among the men. Once, owing to transportation difficulties, the rations were short for days, and the men were in rebellious spirit in consequence. Twice whiskey had been smuggled in, to the utter demoralization of the camp; and one morning, as a last straw, "Cookee" had nearly severed his left hand from his arm with a meat axe. Young Wingate, the head engineer, and Mr. Brown, the foreman, took counsel together. For the three meals of that day they tried three different men out of the gang as "cookees." No one could eat the atrocious food they manufactured. Then Brown bethought himself. "There's an Indian woman living up the cañon that can cook like a French chef," he announced, after a day of unspeakable gnawing beneath his belt. "How about getting her? I've tasted pork and beans at her shack, and flapjacks, and—"

"Get her! get her!" clamored Wingate. "Even if she poisons us, it's better than starving. I'll ride over to-night and offer her big wages."

"How about her staying here?" asked Brown. "The boys are pretty rough and lawless at times, you know."

"Get the axe men to build her a good, roomy shack—the best logs in the place. We'll give her a lock and key for it, and you, Brown, report the very first incivility to her that you hear of," said Wingate, crisply.

That evening Mr. Wingate himself rode over to the cañon; it was a good mile, and the trail was rough in the extreme. He did not dismount when he reached the lonely log lodge, but rapping on the door with the butt of his quirt, he awaited its opening. There was some slight stirring about inside before this occurred; then the door slowly opened, and she stood before him—a rather tall woman, clad in buckskin garments, with a rug made of coyote skins about her shoulders; she wore the beaded leggings and moccasins of her race, and her hair, jet black, hung in ragged plaits about her dark face, from which mournful eyes looked out at the young Montrealer.

Yes, she would go for the wages he offered, she said in halting English; she would come to-morrow at daybreak; she would cook their breakfast.

"Better come to-night," he urged. "The men get down the grade to work very early; breakfast must be on time."

"I be on time," she replied. "I sleep here this night, every night. I not sleep in camp."

Then he told her of the shack he had ordered, and that was even now being built.

She shook her head. "I sleep here every night," she reiterated.

Wingate had met many Indians in his time, so dropped the subject, knowing well that persuasion or argument would be utterly useless.

"All right," he said; "you must do as you like; only remember, an early breakfast to-morrow."

"I 'member," she replied.

He had ridden some twenty yards, when he turned to call back: "Oh, what's your name, please?"

"Catharine," she answered, simply.

"Thank you," he said, and, touching his hat lightly, rode down towards the cañon. Just as he was dipping over its rim he looked back. She was still standing in the doorway, and above and about her were the purple shadows, the awful solitude, of Crow's Nest Mountain.

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Catharine had been cooking at the camp for weeks. The meals were good, the men respected her, and she went her way to and from her shack at the cañon as regularly as the world went around. The autumn slipped by, and the nipping frosts of early winter and the depths of

early snows were already daily occurrences. The big group of solid log shacks that formed the construction camp were all made weather-tight against the long mountain winter. Trails were beginning to be blocked, streams to freeze, and "Old Baldy" already wore a canopy of snow that reached down to the timber line.

"Catharine," spoke young Wingate, one morning, when the clouds hung low and a soft snow fell, packing heavily on the selfsame snows of the previous night, "you had better make up your mind to occupy the shack here. You won't be able to go to your home much longer now at night; it gets dark so early, and the snows are too heavy."

"I go home at night," she repeated.

"But you can't all winter," he exclaimed. "If there was one single horse we could spare from the grade work, I'd see you got it for your journeys, but there isn't. We're terribly short now; every animal in the Pass is overworked as it is. You'd better not try going home any more."

"I go home at night," she repeated.

Wingate frowned impatiently; then in afterthought he smiled. "All right, Catharine," he said, "but I warn you. You'll have a search-party out after you some dark morning, and you know it won't be pleasant to be lost in the snows up that cañon."

"But I go home, night-time," she persisted, and that ended the controversy.

But the catastrophe he predicted was inevitable. Morning after morning he would open the door of the shack he occupied with the other officials, and, looking up the white wastes through the gray-blue dawn, he would watch the distances with an anxiety that meant more than a consideration for his breakfast. The woman interested him. She was so silent, so capable, so stubborn. What was behind all this strength of character? What had given that depth of mournfulness to her eyes? Often he had surprised her watching him, with an odd longing in her face; it was something of the expression he could remember his mother wore when she looked at him long, long ago. It was a vague, haunting look that always brought back the one great tragedy of his life—a tragedy he was even now working night and day at his chosen profession to obliterate from his memory, lest he should be forever unmanned—forever a prey to melancholy.

He was still a young man, but when little more than a boy he had married, and for two years was transcendently happy. Then came the cry of "Kootenay Gold" ringing throughout Canada—of the untold wealth of Kootenay mines. Like thousands of others he followed the beckoning of that yellow finger, taking his young wife

and baby daughter West with him. The little town of Nelson, crouching on its beautiful hills, its feet laved by the waters of Kootenay Lake, was then in its first robust, active infancy. Here he settled, going out alone on long prospecting expeditions; sometimes he was away a week, sometimes a month, with the lure of the gold forever in his veins, but the laughter of his child, the love of his wife, forever in his heart. Then —the day of that awful home-coming! For three weeks the fascination of searching for the golden pay-streak had held him in the mountains. No one could find him when it happened, and now all they could tell him was the story of an upturned canoe found drifting on the lake, of a woman's light summer shawl caught in the thwarts, of a child's little silken bonnet washed ashore.* The great-hearted men of the West had done their utmost in the search that followed. Miners, missionaries, prospectors, Indians, settlers, gamblers, outlaws, had one and all turned out, for they liked young Wingate, and they adored his loving wife and dainty child. But the search was useless. The wild shores of Kootenay Lake alone held the secret of their resting-place.

Young Wingate faced the East once more. There was but one thing to do with his life—work, *work,* WORK; and the harder, the more difficult, that work, the better. It was this very

* Fact.

difficulty that made the engineering on the Crow's Nest Pass so attractive to him. So here he was building grades, blasting tunnels, with Catharine's mournful eyes following him daily, as if she divined something of that long-ago sorrow that had shadowed his almost boyish life.

He liked the woman, and his liking quickened his eye to her hardships, his ear to the hint of lagging weariness in her footsteps; so he was the first to notice it the morning she stumped into the cook-house, her feet bound up in furs, her face drawn in agony.

"Catharine," he exclaimed, "your feet have been frozen!"

She looked like a culprit, but answered: "Not much; I get lose in storm las' night."

"I thought this would happen," he said, indignantly. "After this you sleep here."

"I sleep home," she said, doggedly.

"I won't have it," he declared. "I'll cook for the men myself first."

"Allight," she replied. "You cookee; I go home—me."

That night there was a terrible storm. The wind howled down the throat of the Pass, and the snow fell like bales of sheep's wool, blanketing the trails and drifting into the railroad cuts until they attained their original level. But after she had cooked supper Catharine started for home as usual. The only unusual thing

about it was that the next morning she did not return. It was Sunday, the men's day "off." Wingate ate no breakfast, but after swallowing some strong tea he turned to the foreman. "Mr. Brown, will you come with me to try and hunt up Catharine?" he asked.

"Yes, if we can get beyond the door," assented Brown. "But I doubt if we can make the cañon, sir."

"We'll have a try at it, anyway," said the young engineer. "I almost doubt myself if she made it last night."

"She's a stubborn woman," commented Brown.

"And has her own reasons for it, I suppose," replied Wingate. "But that has nothing to do with her being lost or frozen. If something had not happened I'm sure she would have come to-day, notwithstanding I scolded her yesterday, and told her I'd rather cook myself than let her run such risks. How will we go, Mr. Brown; horses or snowshoes?"

"Shoes," said the foreman decidedly. "That snow'll be above the middle of the biggest horse in the outfit."

So they set forth on their tramp up the slopes, peering right and left as they went for any indication of the absent woman. Wingate's old grief was knocking at his heart once more. A woman lost in the appalling vastness of this

great Western land was entering into his life again. It took them a full hour to go that mile, although both were experts on the shoes, but as they reached the rim of the cañon they were rewarded by seeing a thin blue streak of smoke curling up from her lodge "chimney." Wingate sat down in the snows weakly. The relief had unmanned him.

"I didn't know how much I cared," he said, "until I knew she was safe. She looks at me as my mother used to; her eyes are like mother's, and I loved my mother."

It was a simple, direct speech, but Brown caught its pathos.

"She's a good woman," he blurted out, as they trudged along towards the shack. They knocked on the door. There was no reply. Then just as Wingate suggested forcing it in case she were ill and lying helpless within, a long, low call from the edge of the cañon startled them. They turned and had not followed the direction from which the sound came more than a few yards when they met her coming towards them on snowshoes; in her arms she bore a few faggots, and her face, though smileless, was very welcoming.

She opened the door, bidding them enter. It was quite warm inside, and the air of simple comfort derived from crude benches, tables and shelves, assured them that she had not suffered. Near the fire was drawn a rough home-built

couch, and on it lay in heaped disorder a pile of gray blankets. As the two men warmed their hands at the grateful blaze, the blankets stirred. Then a small hand crept out and a small arm tossed the covers a little aside.

"*Catherine,*" exclaimed Wingate, "have you a child here?"

"Yes," she said simply.

"How long is it that you have had it here?" he demanded.

"Since before I work at your camp." she replied.

"Whew!" said the foreman, "I now understand why she came home nights."

"To think I never guessed it!" murmured Wingate. Then to Catherine: "Why didn't you bring it into camp and keep it there day and night with you, instead of taking these dangerous tramps night and morning?"

"It is a girl child," she answered.

"Well what of it?" he asked impatiently.

"Your camp no place for girl child," she replied, looking directly at him. "Your men they rough, they get whisky sometimes. They fight. They speak bad words, what you call *swear*. I not want her hear that. I not want her see whisky man."

"Oh, Brown!" said Wingate, turning to his companion. "What a reproach! What a reproach! Here our gang is—the vanguard of the

highest civilization, but unfit for association with a little Indian child!"

Brown stood speechless, although in his rough, honest mind he was going over a list of those very "swears" she objected to, but they were mentally directed at the whole outfit of his ruffianly construction gang. He was silently swearing at them for their own shortcomings in that very thing.

The child on the couch stirred again. This time the firelight fell full across the little arm. Wingate stared at it, then his eyes widened. He looked at the woman, then back at the bare arm. It was the arm of a *white* child.

"Catharine, was your husband *white?*" he asked, in a voice that betrayed anxiety.

"I got no husban'," she replied, somewhat defiantly.

"Then—" he began, but his voice faltered.

She came and stood between him and the couch. Something of the look of a she-panther came into her face, her figure, her attitude. Her eyes lost their mournfulness and blazed a black-red at him. Her whole body seemed ready to spring.

"You not touch the girl child!" she half snarled. "I not let you touch her; she *mine,* though I have no husban'!"

"I don't want to touch her, Catharine," he said gently, trying to pacify her. "Believe me, I don't want to touch her."

The woman's whole being changed. A thousand mother-lights gleamed from her eyes, a thousand measures of mother-love stormed at her heart. She stepped close, very close to him and laid her small brown hand on his, then drawing him nearer to her said: "Yes you *do* want to touch her; you not speak truth when you say 'no.' You *do* want to touch her!" With a rapid movement she flung back the blankets, then slipping her bare arm about him she bent his form until he was looking straight into the child's face—a face the living miniature of his own! His eyes, his hair, his small kindly mouth, his fair, perfect skin. He staggered erect.

"Catharine! what does it mean? What does it mean?" he cried hoarsely.

"*Your child*—" she half questioned, half affirmed.

"Mine? Mine?" he called, without human understanding in his voice. "Oh, Catharine! Where did you get her?"

"The shores of Kootenay Lake," she answered.

"Was—was—she *alone?*" he cried.

The woman looked away, slowly shaking her head, and her voice was very gentle as she replied: "No, she alive a little, but *the other,* whose arms 'round her, she not alive; my people, the Kootenay Indians, and I—we—we bury that other."

For a moment there was a speaking silence,

then young Wingate, with the blessed realization that half his world had been saved for him, flung himself on his knees, and, with his arms locked about the little girl, was calling:

"Margie! Margie! Papa's little Margie girl! Do you remember papa? Oh, Margie! Do you? Do you?"

Something dawned in the child's eyes—something akin to a far-off memory. For a moment she looked wonderingly at him, then put her hand up to his forehead and gently pulled a lock of his fair hair that always curled there—an old trick of hers. Then she looked down at his vest pocket, slowly pulled out his watch and held it to her ear. The next minute her arms slipped round his neck.

"Papa," she said, "papa been away from Margie a long time."

Young Wingate was sobbing. He had not noticed that the big, rough foreman had gone out of the shack with tear-dimmed eyes, and had quietly closed the door behind him.

* * * * * * * * * *

It was evening before Wingate got all the story from Catharine, for she was slow of speech, and found it hard to explain her feelings. But Brown, who had returned alone to the camp in the morning, now came back, packing an immense bundle of all the tinned delicacies he could find, which, truth to tell, were few. He

knew some words of Kootenay, and led Catharine on to reveal the strange history that sounded like some tale from fairyland. It appeared that the reason Catharine did not attempt to go to the camp that morning was that Margie was not well, so she would not leave her, but in her heart of hearts she knew young Wingate would come searching to her lodge. She loved the child as only an Indian woman can love an adopted child. She longed for him to come when she found Margie was ill, yet dreaded that coming from the depths of her soul. She dreaded the hour he would see the child and take it away. For the moment she looked upon his face, the night he rode over to engage her to cook, months ago, she had known he was Margie's father. The little thing was the perfect mirror of him, and Catharine's strange wild heart rejoiced to find him, yet hid the child from him for very fear of losing it out of her own life.

After finding it almost dead in its dead mother's arms on the shore, the Indians had given it to Catharine for the reason that she could speak some English. They were only a passing band of Kootenays, and as they journeyed on and on, week in and week out, they finally came to Crow's Nest Mountain. Here the child fell ill, so they built Catharine a log shack, and left her with plenty of food, sufficient to last until the railway gang had worked that

far up the Pass, when more food would be available. When she had finished the strange history, Wingate looked at her long and lovingly.

"Catharine," he said, "you were almost going to fight me once to-day. You stood between the couch and me like a panther. What changed you so that you led me to my baby girl yourself?"

"I make one last fight to keep her," she said, haltingly. "She mine so long, I want her; I want her till I die. Then I think many times I see your face at camp. It look like sky when sun does not shine—all cloud, no smile, no laugh. I know you think of your baby then. Then I watch you many times. Then after while my heart is sick for you, like you are my own boy, like I am your own mother. I hate see no sun in your face. I think I not good mother to you; if I was good mother I would give you your child; make the sun come in your face. To-day I make last fight to keep the child. She's mine so long, I want her till I die. Then somet'ing in my heart say, 'He's like son to you, as if he your own boy; make him glad—happy. Oh, ver' glad! Be like his own mother. Find him his baby.'"

"Bless the mother heart of her!" growled the big foreman, frowning to keep his face from twitching.

It was twilight when they mounted the horses one of the men had brought up for them to ride

home on, Wingate with his treasure-child hugged tightly in his arms. Words were powerless to thank the woman who had saved half his world for him. His voice choked when he tried, but she understood, and her woman's heart was very, very full.

Just as they reached the rim of the cañon Wingate turned and looked back. His arms tightened about little Margie as his eyes rested on Catharine—as once before she was standing in the doorway, alone; alone, and above and about her were the purple shadows, the awful solitude of Crow's Nest Mountain.

"Brown!" he called. "Hold on, Brown! *I can't do it! I can't leave her like that!*"

He wheeled his horse about and, plunging back through the snow, rode again to her door. Her eyes radiated as she looked at him. Years had been wiped from his face since the morning. He was a laughing boy once more.

"You are right," he said, "I cannot keep my little girl in that rough camp. You said it was no place for a girl child. You are right. I will send her into Calgary until my survey is over. Catharine, will you go with her, take care of her, nurse her, guard her for me? You said I was as your own son; will you be that good mother to me that you want to be? Will you do this for your white boy?"

He had never seen her smile before. A moment ago her heart had been breaking, but now she knew with a great gladness that she was not only going to keep and care for Margie, but that this laughing boy would be as a son to her for all time. No wonder that Catharine of the Crow's Nest smiled!

# A Red Girl's Reasoning

"Be pretty good to her, Charlie, my boy, or she'll balk sure as shooting."

That was what old Jimmy Robinson said to his brand new son-in-law, while they waited for the bride to reappear.

"Oh! you bet, there's no danger of much else. I'll be good to her, help me Heaven," replied Charlie McDonald, brightly.

"Yes, of course you will," answered the old man, "but don't you forget, there's a good big bit of her mother in her, and," closing his left eye significantly, "you don't understand these Indians as I do."

"But I'm just as fond of them, Mr. Robinson," Charlie said assertively, "and I get on with them too, now, don't I?"

"Yes, pretty well for a town boy; but when you have lived forty years among these people, as I have done; when you have had your wife as long as I have had mine—for there's no getting over it, Christine's disposition is as native as her mother's, every bit—and perhaps when you've owned for eighteen years a daughter as

dutiful, as loving, as fearless, and, alas! as obstinate as that little piece you are stealing away from me to-day—I tell you, youngster, you'll know more than you know now. It is kindness for kindness, bullet for bullet, blood for blood. Remember, what you are, she will be," and the old Hudson Bay trader scrutinized Charlie McDonald's face like a detective.

It was a happy, fair face, good to look at, with a certain ripple of dimples somewhere about the mouth, and eyes that laughed out the very sunniness of their owner's soul. There was not a severe nor yet a weak line anywhere. He was a well-meaning young fellow, happily dispositioned, and a great favorite with the tribe at Robinson's Post, whither he had gone in the service of the Department of Agriculture, to assist the local agent through the tedium of a long census-taking.

As a boy he had had the Indian relic-hunting craze, as a youth he had studied Indian archæology and folk-lore, as a man he consummated his predilections for Indianology by loving, winning and marrying the quiet little daughter of the English trader, who himself had married a native woman twenty years ago. The country was all backwoods, and the Post miles and miles from even the semblance of civilization, and the lonely young Englishman's heart had gone out to the girl who, apart from speaking a very few

words of English, was utterly uncivilized and uncultured, but had withal that marvellously innate refinement so universally possessed by the higher tribes of North American Indians.

Like all her race, observant, intuitive, having a horror of ridicule, consequently quick at acquirement and teachable in mental and social habits, she had developed from absolute pagan indifference into a sweet, elderly Christian woman, whose broken English, quiet manner, and still handsome copper-colored face, were the joy of old Robinson's declining years.

He had given their daughter Christine all the advantages of his own learning—which, if truthfully told, was not universal; but the girl had a fair common education, and the native adaptability to progress.

She belonged to neither and still to both types of the cultured Indian. The solemn, silent, almost heavy manner of the one so commingled with the gesticulating Frenchiness and vivacity of the other, that one unfamiliar with native Canadian life would find it difficult to determine her nationality.

She looked very pretty to Charles McDonald's loving eyes, as she reappeared in the doorway, holding her mother's hand and saying some happy words of farewell. Personally she looked much the same as her sisters, all Canada through, who are the offspring of red and white parent-

age—olive-complexioned, gray-eyed, black-haired, with figure slight and delicate, and the wistful, unfathomable expression in her whole face that turns one so heart-sick as they glance at the young Indians of to-day—it is the forerunner too frequently of "the white man's disease," consumption—but McDonald was pathetically in love, and thought her the most beautiful woman he had ever seen in his life.

There had not been much of a wedding ceremony. The priest had cantered through the service in Latin, pronounced the benediction in English, and congratulated the "happy couple" in Indian, as a compliment to the assembled tribe in the little amateur structure that did service at the post as a sanctuary.

But the knot was tied as firmly and indissolubly as if all Charlie McDonald's swell city friends had crushed themselves up against the chancel to congratulate him, and in his heart he was deeply thankful to escape the flower-pelting, white gloves, rice-throwing, and ponderous stupidity of a breakfast, and indeed all the regulation gimcracks of the usual marriage celebrations, and it was with a hand trembling with absolute happiness that he assisted his little Indian wife into the old muddy buckboard that, hitched to an underbred-looking pony, was to convey them over the first stages of their journey. Then came more adieus, some hand-clasp-

ing, old Jimmy Robinson looking very serious just at the last, Mrs. Jimmy, stout, stolid, betraying nothing of visible emotion, and then the pony, rough-shod and shaggy, trudged on, while mutual hand-waves were kept up until the old Hudson Bay Post dropped out of sight, and the buckboard with its lightsome load of hearts, deliriously happy, jogged on over the uneven trail.

* * * * * * * * * *

She was "all the rage" that winter at the provincial capital. The men called her a "deuced fine little woman." The ladies said she was "just the sweetest wildflower." Whereas she was really but an ordinary, pale, dark girl who spoke slowly and with a strong accent, who danced fairly well, sang acceptably, and never stirred outside the door without her husband.

Charlie was proud of her; he was proud that she had "taken" so well among his friends, proud that she bore herself so complacently in the drawing-rooms of the wives of pompous Government officials, but doubly proud of her almost abject devotion to him. If ever human being was worshipped that being was Charlie McDonald; it could scarcely have been otherwise, for the almost godlike strength of his passion for that little wife of his would have mastered and melted a far more invincible citadel than an already affectionate woman's heart.

Favorites socially, McDonald and his wife went everywhere. In fashionable circles she was "new"—a potent charm to acquire popularity, and the little velvet-clad figure was always the centre of interest among all the women in the room. She always dressed in velvet. No woman in Canada, has she but the faintest dash of native blood in her veins, but loves velvets and silks. As beef to the Englishman, wine to the Frenchman, fads to the Yankee, so are velvet and silk to the Indian girl, be she wild as prairie grass, be she on the borders of civilization, or, having stepped within its boundary, mounted the steps of culture even under its superficial heights.

"Such a dolling little appil blossom," said the wife of a local M.P., who brushed up her etiquette and English once a year at Ottawa. "Does she always laugh so sweetly, and gobble you up with those great big gray eyes of hers, when you are togetheah at home, Mr. McDonald? If so, I should think youah pooah brothah would feel himself terribly *de trop*."

He laughed lightly. "Yes, Mrs. Stuart, there are not two of Christie; she is the same at home and abroad, and as for Joe, he doesn't mind us a bit; he's no end fond of her."

"I'm very glad he is. I always fancied he did not care for her, d'you know."

If ever a blunt woman existed it was Mrs. Stuart. She really meant nothing, but her

remark bothered Charlie. He was fond of his brother, and jealous for Christie's popularity. So that night when he and Joe were having a pipe he said:

"I've never asked you yet what you thought of her, Joe." A brief pause, then Joe spoke. "I'm glad she loves you."

"Why?"

"Because that girl has but two possibilities regarding humanity—love or hate."

"Humph! Does she love or hate *you?*"

"Ask her."

"You talk bosh. If she hated you, you'd get out. If she loved you I'd *make* you get out."

Joe McDonald whistled a little, then laughed.

"Now that we are on the subject, I might as well ask—honestly, old man, wouldn't you and Christie prefer keeping house alone to having me always around?"

"Nonsense, sheer nonsense. Why, thunder, man, Christie's no end fond of you, and as for me—you surely don't want assurances from me?"

"No, but I often think a young couple—"

"Young couple be blowed! After a while when they want you and your old surveying chains, and spindle-legged tripod telescope kickshaws, farther west, I venture to say the little woman will cry her eyes out—won't you, Christie?" This last in a higher tone, as through

clouds of tobacco smoke he caught sight of his wife passing the doorway.

She entered. "Oh, no, I would not cry; I never do cry, but I would be heart-sore to lose you, Joe, and apart from that"—a little wickedly—"you may come in handy for an exchange some day, as Charlie does always say when he hoards up duplicate relics."

"Are Charlie and I duplicates?"

"Well—not exactly"—her head a little to one side, and eyeing them both merrily, while she slipped softly on to the arm of her husband's chair—"but, in the event of Charlie's failing me"—everyone laughed then. The "some day" that she spoke of was nearer than they thought. It came about in this wise.

There was a dance at the Lieutenant-Governor's, and the world and his wife were there. The nobs were in great feather that night, particularly the women, who flaunted about in new gowns and much splendor. Christie McDonald had a new gown also, but wore it with the utmost unconcern, and if she heard any of the flattering remarks made about her she at least appeared to disregard them.

"I never dreamed you could wear blue so splendidly," said Captain Logan, as they sat out a dance together.

"Indeed she can, though," interposed Mrs. Stuart, halting in one of her gracious sweeps

down the room with her husband's private secretary.

"Don't shout so, captain. I can hear every sentence you uttah—of course Mrs. McDonald can wear blue—she has a morning gown of cadet blue that she is a picture in."

"You are both very kind," said Christie. "I like blue; it is the color of all the Hudson's Bay posts, and the factor's residence is always decorated in blue."

"Is it really? How interesting—do tell us some more of your old home, Mrs. McDonald; you so seldom speak of your life at the post, and we fellows so often wish to hear of it all," said Logan eagerly.

"Why do you not ask me of it, then?"

"Well—er, I'm sure I don't know; I'm fully interested in the Ind—in your people—your mother's people, I mean, but it always seems so personal, I suppose; and—a—a—"

"Perhaps you are, like all other white people, afraid to mention my nationality to me."

The captain winced, and Mrs. Stuart laughed uneasily. Joe McDonald was not far off, and he was listening, and chuckling, and saying to himself, "That's you, Christie, lay 'em out; it won't hurt 'em to know how they appear once in a while."

"Well, Captain Logan," she was saying, "what is it you would like to hear—of my people, or my parents, or myself?"

"All, all, my dear," cried Mrs. Stuart clamorously. "I'll speak for him—tell us of yourself and your mother—your father is delightful, I am sure—but then he is only an ordinary Englishman, not half as interesting as a foreigner, or—or, perhaps I should say, a native."

Christie laughed. "Yes," she said, "my father often teases my mother now about how *very* native she was when he married her; then, how could she have been otherwise? She did not know a word of English, and there was not another English-speaking person besides my father and his two companions within sixty miles."

"Two companions, eh? one a Catholic priest and the other a wine merchant, I suppose, and with your father in the Hudson Bay, they were good representatives of the pioneers in the New World," remarked Logan, waggishly.

"Oh, no, they were all Hudson Bay men. There were no rumsellers and no missionaries in that part of the country then."

Mrs. Stuart looked puzzled. "*No missionaries?*" she repeated with an odd intonation.

Christie's insight was quick. There was a peculiar expression of interrogation in the eyes of her listeners, and the girl's blood leapt angrily up into her temples as she said hurriedly, "I know what you mean; I know what you are thinking. You are wondering how my parents were married—"

"Well—er, my dear, it seems peculiar—if there was no priest, and no magistrate, why—a—" Mrs. Stuart paused awkwardly.

"The marriage was performed by Indian rites," said Christie.

"Oh, do tell me about it; is the ceremony very interesting and quaint—are your chieftains anything like Buddhist priests?" It was Logan who spoke.

"Why, no," said the girl in amazement at that gentleman's ignorance. "There is no ceremony at all, save a feast. The two people just agree to live only with and for each other, and the man takes his wife to his home, just as you do. There is no ritual to bind them; they need none; an Indian's word was his law in those days, you know."

Mrs. Stuart stepped backwards. "Ah!" was all she said. Logan removed his eye-glass and stared blankly at Christie. "And did McDonald marry you in this singular fashion?" he questioned.

"Oh, no, we were married by Father O'Leary. Why do you ask?"

"Because if he had, I'd have blown his brains out to-morrow."

Mrs. Stuart's partner, who had hitherto been silent, coughed and began to twirl his cuff stud nervously, but nobody took any notice of him. Christie had risen, slowly, ominously—risen, with the dignity and pride of an empress.

"Captain Logan," she said, "what do you dare to say to me? What do you dare to mean? Do you presume to think it would not have been lawful for Charlie to marry me according to my people's rites? Do you for one instant dare to question that my parents were not as legally—"

"Don't, dear, don't," interrupted Mrs. Stuart hurriedly; "it is bad enough now, goodness knows; don't make—" Then she broke off blindly. Christie's eyes glared at the mumbling woman, at her uneasy partner, at the horrified captain. Then they rested on the McDonald brothers, who stood within earshot, Joe's face scarlet, her husband's white as ashes, with something in his eyes she had never seen before. It was Joe who saved the situation. Stepping quickly across towards his sister-in-law, he offered her his arm, saying, "The next dance is ours, I think, Christie."

Then Logan pulled himself together, and attempted to carry Mrs. Stuart off for the waltz, but for once in her life that lady had lost her head. "It is shocking!" she said, "outrageously shocking! I wonder if they told Mr. McDonald before he married her!" Then looking hurriedly round, she too saw the young husband's face—and knew that they had not.

"Humph! deuced nice kettle of fish—and poor old Charlie has always thought so much of honorable birth."

Logan thought he spoke in an undertone, but "poor old Charlie" heard him. He followed his wife and brother across the room. "Joe," he said, "will you see that a trap is called?" Then to Christie, "Joe will see that you get home all right." He wheeled on his heel then and left the ball-room.

Joe *did* see.

He tucked a poor, shivering, pallid little woman into a cab, and wound her bare throat up in the scarlet velvet cloak that was hanging uselessly over her arm. She crouched down beside him, saying, "I am so cold, Joe; I am so cold," but she did not seem to know enough to wrap herself up. Joe felt all through this long drive that nothing this side of Heaven would be so good as to die, and he was glad when the poor little voice at his elbow said, "What is he so angry at, Joe?"

"I don't know exactly, dear," he said gently, "but I think it was what you said about this Indian marriage."

"But why should I not have said it? Is there anything wrong about it?" she asked pitifully.

"Nothing, that I can see—there was no other way; but Charlie is very angry, and you must be brave and forgiving with him, Christie, dear."

"But I did never see him like that before, did you?"

"Once."

"When?"

Genuine Old Red River Cart.

"Oh, at college, one day, a boy tore his prayer-book in half, and threw it into the grate, just to be mean, you know. Our mother had given it to him at his confirmation."

"And did he look so?"

"About, but it all blew over in a day—Charlie's tempers are short and brisk. Just don't take any notice of him; run off to bed, and he'll have forgotten it by the morning."

They reached home at last. Christie said good-night quietly, going directly to her room. Joe went to his room also, filled a pipe and smoked for an hour. Across the passage he could hear her slippered feet pacing up and down, up and down the length of her apartment. There was something panther-like in those restless foot-falls, a meaning velvetyness that made him shiver, and again he wished he were dead—or elsewhere.

After a time the hall door opened, and some-one came upstairs, along the passage, and to the little woman's room. As he entered, she turned and faced him.

"Christie," he said harshly, "do you know what you have done?"

"Yes," taking a step nearer him, her whole soul springing up into her eyes, "I have angered you, Charlie, and—"

"Angered me? You have disgraced me; and, moreover, you have disgraced yourself and both your parents."

"*Disgraced?*"

"Yes, *disgraced;* you have literally declared to the whole city that your father and mother were never married, and that you are the child of—what shall we call it—love? certainly not legality."

Across the hallway sat Joe McDonald, his blood freezing; but it leapt into every vein like fire at the awful anguish in the little voice that cried simply, "Oh! Charlie!"

"How could you do it, how could you do it, Christie, without shame either for yourself or for me, let alone your parents?"

The voice was like an angry demon's—not a trace was there in it of the yellow-haired, blue-eyed, laughing-lipped boy who had driven away so gaily to the dance five hours before.

"Shame? Why should I be ashamed of the rites of my people any more than you should be ashamed of the customs of yours—of a marriage more sacred and holy than half of your white man's mockeries."

It was the voice of another nature in the girl—the love and the pleading were dead in it.

"Do you mean to tell me, Charlie—you who have studied my race and their laws for years—do you mean to tell me that, because there was no priest and no magistrate, my mother was not married? Do you mean to say that all my forefathers, for hundreds of years back, have been

illegally born? If so, you blacken my ancestry beyond—beyond—beyond all reason."

"No, Christie, I would not be so brutal as that; but your father and mother live in more civilized times. Father O'Leary has been at the post for nearly twenty years. Why was not your father straight enough to have the ceremony performed when he *did* get the chance?"

The girl turned upon him with the face of a fury. "Do you suppose," she almost hissed, "that my mother would be married according to your *white* rites after she had been five years a wife, and I had been born in the meantime? *No,* a thousand times I say, *no.* When the priest came with his notions of Christianizing, and talked to them of re-marriage by the Church, my mother arose and said, "Never—never—I have never had but this one husband; he has had none but me for wife, and to have you re-marry us would be to say as much to the whole world as that we had never been married before.* You go away; *I* do not ask that *your* people be re-married; talk not so to me. I *am* married, and you or the Church cannot do or undo it."

"Your father was a fool not to insist upon the law, and so was the priest."

"Law? *My* people have *no* priest, and my nation cringes not to law. Our priest is purity, and our law is honor. Priest? Was there a

* Fact.

*priest* at the most holy marriage known to humanity—that stainless marriage whose offspring is the God you white men told my pagan mother of?"

"Christie—you are *worse* than blasphemous; such a profane remark shows how little you understand the sanctity of the Christian faith—"

"I know what I *do* understand; it is that you are hating me because I told some of the beautiful customs of my people to Mrs. Stuart and those men."

"Pooh! who cares for them? It is not them; the trouble is they won't keep their mouths shut. Logan's a cad and will toss the whole tale about at the club before to-morrow night; and as for the Stuart woman, I'd like to know how I'm going to take you to Ottawa for presentation and the opening, while she is blabbing the whole miserable scandal in every drawing-room, and I'll be pointed out as a romantic fool, and you—as worse; I *can't* understand why your father didn't tell me before we were married; I at least might have warned you to never mention it." Something of recklessness rang up through his voice, just as the panther-likeness crept up from her footsteps and couched herself in hers. She spoke in tones quiet, soft, deadly.

"Before we were married! Oh! Charlie, would it have—made—any—difference?"

"God knows," he said, throwing himself into

a chair, his blonde hair rumpled and wet. It was the only boyish thing about him now.

She walked towards him, then halted in the centre of the room. "Charlie McDonald," she said, and it was as if a stone had spoken, "look up." He raised his head, startled by her tone. There was a threat in her eyes that, had his rage been less courageous, his pride less bitterly wounded, would have cowed him.

"There was no such time as that before our marriage, for we *are not married now.* Stop," she said, outstretching her palms against him as he sprang to his feet, "I tell you we are not married. Why should I recognize the rites of your nation when you do not acknowledge the rites of mine? According to your own words, my parents should have gone through your church ceremony as well as through an Indian contract; according to *my* words, *we* should go through an Indian contract as well as through a church marriage. If their union is illegal, so is ours. If you think my father is living in dishonor with my mother, my people will think I am living in dishonor with you. How do I know when another nation will come and conquer you as you white men conquered us? And they will have another marriage rite to perform, and they will tell us another truth, that you are not my husband, that you are but disgracing and dishonoring me, that you are keeping me here, not as your wife, but as your—your—*squaw.*"

The terrible word had never passed her lips before, and the blood stained her face to her very temples. She snatched off her wedding ring and tossed it across the room, saying scornfully, "That thing is as empty to me as the Indian rites to you."

He caught her by the wrists; his small white teeth were locked tightly, his blue eyes blazed into hers.

"Christine, do you dare to doubt my honor towards you? *you*, whom I should have died for; do you *dare* to think I have kept you here, not as my wife, but—"

"Oh, God! You are hurting me; you are breaking my arm," she gasped.

The door was flung open, and Joe McDonald's sinewy hands clinched like vices on his brother's shoulders.

"Charlie, you're mad, mad as the devil. Let go of her this minute."

The girl staggered backwards as the iron fingers loosed her wrists. "Oh! Joe," she cried, "I am not his wife, and he says I am born—nameless."

"Here," said Joe, shoving his brother towards the door. "Go downstairs till you can collect your senses. If ever a being acted like an infernal fool, you're the man."

The young husband looked from one to the other, dazed by his wife's insult, abandoned to

a fit of ridiculously childish temper. Blind as he was with passion, he remembered long afterwards seeing them standing there, his brother's face darkened with a scowl of anger—his wife, clad in the mockery of her ball dress, her scarlet velvet cloak half covering her bare brown neck and arms, her eyes like flames of fire, her face like a piece of sculptured graystone.

Without a word he flung himself furiously from the room, and immediately afterwards they heard the heavy hall door bang behind him.

"Can I do anything for you, Christie?" asked her brother-in-law calmly.

"No, thank you—unless—I think I would like a drink of water, please."

He brought her up a goblet filled with wine; her hand did not even tremble as she took it. As for Joe, a demon arose in his soul as he noticed she kept her wrists covered.

"Do you think he will come back?" she said.

"Oh, yes, of course; he'll be all right in the morning. Now go to bed like a good little girl, and—and, I say, Christie, you can call me if you want anything; I'll be right here, you know."

"Thank you, Joe; you are kind—and good."

He returned then to his apartment. His pipe was out, but he picked up a newspaper instead, threw himself into an armchair, and in a half-hour was in the land of dreams.

When Charlie came home in the morning, after a six-mile walk into the country and back again, his foolish anger was dead and buried. Logan's "Poor old Charlie" did not ring so distinctly in his ears. Mrs. Stuart's horrified expression had faded considerably from his recollection. He thought only of that surprisingly tall, dark girl, whose eyes looked like coals, whose voice pierced him like a flint-tipped arrow. Ah, well, they would never quarrel again like that, he told himself. She loved him so, and would forgive him after he had talked quietly to her, and told her what an ass he was. She was simple-minded and awfully ignorant to pitch those old Indian laws at him in her fury, but he could not blame her; oh, no, he could not for one moment blame her. He had been terribly severe and unreasonable, and the horrid McDonald temper had got the better of him; and he loved her so. Oh! he loved her so! She would surely feel that, and forgive him, and— He went straight to his wife's room. The blue velvet evening dress lay on the chair into which he had thrown himself when he doomed his life's happiness by those two words, "God knows." A bunch of dead daffodils and her slippers were on the floor, everything—but Christie.

He went to his brother's bedroom door.

"Joe," he called, rapping nervously thereon; "Joe, wake up; where's Christie, d'you know?"

"Good Lord, no," gasped that youth, springing out of his armchair and opening the door. As he did so a note fell from off the handle. Charlie's face blanched to his very hair while Joe read aloud, his voice weakening at every word:—

"DEAR OLD JOE,—I went into your room at daylight to get that picture of the Post on your bookshelves. I hope you do not mind, but I kissed your hair while you slept; it was so curly, and yellow, and soft, just like his. Good-bye, Joe.

"CHRISTIE."

And when Joe looked into his brother's face and saw the anguish settle in those laughing blue eyes, the despair that drove the dimples away from that almost girlish mouth; when he realized that this boy was but four-and-twenty years old, and that all his future was perhaps darkened and shadowed for ever, a great, deep sorrow arose in his heart, and he forgot all things, all but the agony that rang up through the voice of the fair, handsome lad as he staggered forward, crying, "Oh! Joe—what shall I do—what shall I do!"

* * * * * * * * * *

It was months and months before he found her, but during all that time he had never known a hopeless moment; discouraged he often was,

but despondent, never. The sunniness of his ever-boyish heart radiated with a warmth that would have flooded a much deeper gloom than that which settled within his eager young life. Suffer? ah! yes, he suffered, not with locked teeth and stony stoicism, not with the masterful self-command, the reserve, the conquered bitterness of the still-water sort of nature, that is supposed to run to such depths. He tried to be bright, and his sweet old boyish self. He would laugh sometimes in a pitiful, pathetic fashion. He took to petting dogs, looking into their large, solemn eyes with his wistful, questioning blue ones; he would kiss them, as women sometimes do, and call them "dear old fellow," in tones that had tears; and once in the course of his travels, while at a little way-station, he discovered a huge St. Bernard imprisoned by some mischance in an empty freight car; the animal was nearly dead from starvation, and it seemed to salve his own sick heart to rescue back the dog's life. Nobody claimed the big starving creature, the train hands knew nothing of its owner, and gladly handed it over to its deliverer. "Hudson," he called it, and afterwards when Joe McDonald would relate the story of his brother's life he invariably terminated it with, "And I really believe that big lumbering brute saved him." From what, he was never known to say.

But all things end, and he heard of her at last. She had never returned to the Post, as he at first thought she would, but had gone to the little town of B——, in Ontario, where she was making her living at embroidery and plain sewing.

The September sun had set redly when at last he reached the outskirts of the town, opened up the wicket gate, and walked up the weedy, unkept path leading to the cottage where she lodged.

Even through the twilight, he could see her there, leaning on the rail of the verandah—oddly enough she had about her shoulders the scarlet velvet cloak she wore when he had flung himself so madly from the room that night.

The moment the lad saw her his heart swelled with a sudden heat. burning moisture leapt into his eyes, and clogged his long, boyish lashes. He bounded up the steps—"Christie," he said, and the word scorched his lips like audible flame.

She turned to him, and for a second stood magnetized by his passionately wistful face; her peculiar grayish eyes seemed to drink the very life of his unquenchable love, though the tears that suddenly sprang into his seemed to absorb every pulse in his body through those hungry, pleading eyes of his that had, oh! so often been blinded by her kisses when once her whole world lay in their blue depths.

"You will come back to me, Christie, my wife? My wife, you will let me love you again?"

She gave a singular little gasp, and shook her head. "Don't, oh! don't," he cried piteously. "You will come to me, dear? it is all such a bitter mistake—I did not understand. Oh! Christie, I did not understand, and you'll forgive me, and love me again, won't you—won't you?"

"No," said the girl with quick, indrawn breath.

He dashed the back of his hand across his wet eyelids. His lips were growing numb, and he bungled over the monosyllable "Why?"

"I do not like you," she answered quietly.

"God! Oh! God, what is there left?"

She did not appear to hear the heart-break in his voice; she stood like one wrapped in sombre thought; no blaze, no tear, nothing in her eyes; no hardness, no tenderness about her mouth. The wind was blowing her cloak aside, and the only visible human life in her whole body was once when he spoke the muscles of her brown arm seemed to contract.

"But, darling, you are mine—*mine*—we are husband and wife! Oh, heaven, you *must* love me, you *must* come to me again."

"You cannot *make* me come," said the icy voice, "neither church, nor law, nor even"—and the voice softened—"nor even love can make a slave of a red girl."

"Heaven forbid it," he faltered. "No, Christie, I will never claim you without your love. What reunion would that be? But oh, Christie,

you are lying to me, you are lying to yourself, you are lying to heaven."

She did not move. If only he could touch her he felt as sure of her yielding as he felt sure there was a hereafter. The memory of times when he had but to lay his hand on her hair to call a most passionate response from her filled his heart with a torture that choked all words before they reached his lips; at the thought of those days he forgot she was unapproachable, forgot how forbidding were her eyes, how stony her lips. Flinging himself forward, his knee on the chair at her side, his face pressed hardly in the folds of the cloak on her shoulder, he clasped his arms about her with a boyish petulance, saying, "Christie, Christie, my little girl wife, I love you, I love you, and you are killing me."

She quivered from head to foot as his fair, wavy hair brushed her neck, his despairing face sank lower until his cheek, hot as fire, rested on the cool, olive flesh of her arm. A warm moisture oozed up through her skin, and as he felt its glow he looked up. Her teeth, white and cold, were locked over her under lip, and her eyes were as gray stones.

Not murderers alone know the agony of a death sentence.

"Is it all useless? all useless, dear?" he said, with lips starving for hers.

"All useless," she repeated. "I have no love for you now. You forfeited me and my heart months ago, when you said *those two words.*"

His arms fell away from her wearily, he arose mechanically, he placed his little gray checked cap on the back of his yellow curls, the old-time laughter was dead in the blue eyes that now looked scared and haunted, the boyishness and the dimples crept away for ever from the lips that quivered like a child's; he turned from her, but she had looked once into his face as the Law Giver must have looked at the land of Canaan outspread at his feet. She watched him go down the long path and through the picket gate, she watched the big yellowish dog that had waited for him lumber up on to its feet—stretch—then follow him. She was conscious of but two things, the vengeful lie in her soul, and a little space on her arm that his wet lashes had brushed.

* * * * * * * *

It was hours afterwards when he reached his room. He had said nothing, done nothing—what use were words or deeds? Old Jimmy Robinson was right; she had "balked" sure enough.

What a bare, hotelish room it was! He tossed off his coat and sat for ten minutes looking blankly at the sputtering gas jet. Then his whole life, desolate as a desert, loomed up before him with appalling distinctness. Throwing himself

on the floor beside his bed, with clasped hands and arms outstretched on the white counterpane, he sobbed. "Oh! God, dear God, I thought you loved me; I thought you'd let me have her again, but you must be tired of me, tired of loving me too. I've nothing left now, nothing! it doesn't seem that I even have you to-night."

He lifted his face then, for his dog, big and clumsy and yellow, was licking at his sleeve.

# The Envoy Extraordinary

THERE had been a great deal of trouble in the Norris family, and for weeks old Bill Norris had gone about scowling as blackly as a thundercloud, speaking to no one but his wife and daughter, and oftentimes muttering inaudible things that, however, had the tone of invective; and accompanied, as these mutterings were, with a menacing shake of his burly head, old Bill finally grew to be an acquaintance few desired.

Mrs. Norris showed equal, though not similar, signs of mental disturbance; for, womanlike, she clothed her worry in placidity and silence. Her kindly face became drawn and lined; she laughed less frequently. She never went "neighboring" or "buggy-riding" with old Bill now. But the trim farmhouse was just as spotless, just as beautifully kept, the cooking just as wholesome and homelike, the linen as white, the garden as green, the chickens as fat, the geese as noisy, as in the days when her eyes were less grave and her lips unknown to sighs. And what was it all about but the simple matter of a marriage—Sam's marriage? Sam, the big, genial, curly-headed only

THE QU'APPELLE VALLEY.

Miss Johnson used to give recitals here in the early nineties.

son of the house of Norris, who saw fit to take unto himself as a life partner tiny, delicate, college-bred Della Kennedy. who taught school over on the Sixth Concession, and knew more about making muslin shirtwaists than cooking for the threshers, could quote from all the mental and moral philosophers, could wrestle with French and Latin verbs, and had memorized half the things Tennyson and Emerson had ever written, but could not milk a cow or churn up a week's supply of butter if the executioner stood ready with his axe to chop off her pretty yellow mop of a head in case she failed. How old Billy stormed when Sam started "keeping company" with her!

"Nice young goslin' fer you to be a-goin' with!" he scowled when Sam would betake himself towards the red gate every evening after chores were done. "Nice gal fer you to bring home to help yer mother; all she'll do is to play May Queen and have the hull lot of us a-trottin' to wait on her. You'll marry a farmer's gal, *I* say, one that's brung up like yerself and yer mother and me, or I tell yer yer shan't have one consarned acre of this place. I'll leave the hull farm to yer sister Jane's man. *She* married somethin' like—decent, stiddy, hard-working man is Sid Sampson, and *he'll* git what land I have to leave."

"I quite know that, dad," Sam blazed forth, irritably; "so does he. That's what he married

Janie for—the whole township knows that. He's never given her a kind word, or a holiday, or a new dress, since they were married—eight years. She slaves and toils, and he rich as any man need be; owns three farms already, money in the bank, cattle, horses—everything. But look at Janie; she looks as old as mother. I pity *his* son, if he ever has one. Thank heaven, Janie has no children!"

"Come, come, father—Sam!" a patient voice would interrupt, and Mrs. Norris would appear at the door, vainly endeavoring to make peace. "I'll own up to both of you I'd sooner have a farmer's daughter for mine-in-law than Della Kennedy. But, father, he ain't married yet, and—"

"Ain't married, eh?" blurted in old Bill. "But he's a-goin' to marry her. But I'll tell you both right here, she'll never set foot in my house, ner I in her'n. Sam ken keep her, but what on, I don't know. He gits right out of this here farm the day he marries her, and he don't come back, not while I'm a-livin'."

It was all this that made old Billy Norris morose, and Mrs. Norris silent and patient and laughless, for Sam married the despised "gosling" right at harvest time, when hands were so scarce that farmers wrangled and fought, day in and day out, to get one single man to go into the field.

This was Sam's golden opportunity. His father's fields stood yellow with ripening grain to be cut on the morrow, but he deliberately hired himself out to a neighbor, where he would get good wages to start a little home with; for, farmer-like, old Billy Norris never paid his son wages. Sam was supposed to work for nothing but his clothes and board as reward, and a possible slice of the farm when the old man died, while a good harvest hand gets board and high wages, to boot. This then was the hour to strike, and the morning the grain stood ready for the reaper Sam paused at the outside kitchen door at sunrise.

"Mother," he said, "I've got to have her. I'm going to marry her to-day, and to-morrow start working for Mr. Willson, who will pay me enough to keep a wife. I'm sorry, mother, but—well, I've got to have her. Some day you'll know her, and you'll love her, I know you will; and if there's ever any children—"

But Mrs. Norris had clutched him by the arm. "Sammy," she whispered, "your father will be raging mad at your going, and harvest hands so scarce. I *know* he'll never let me go near you, never. But if there's ever any children, Sammy, you just come for your mother, and I'll go to you and her *without* his letting."

Then with one of the all too few kisses that are ever given or received in a farmhouse life,

she let him go. The storm burst at breakfast time when Sam did not appear, and the poor mother tried to explain his absence, as only a mother will. Old Billy waxed suspicious, then jumped at facts. The marriage was bad enough, but this being left in the lurch at the eleventh hour, his son's valuable help transferred from the home farm to Mr. Willson's, with whom he always quarreled in church, road, and political matters, was too much.

"But, father, you never paid him wages," ventured the mother.

"Wages? Wages to one's own son, that one has raised and fed and shod from the cradle? Wages, when he knowed he'd come in fer part of the farm when I'd done with it? Who in consarnation ever gives their son wages?"

"But, father, you told him if he married her he was never to have the farm—that you'd leave it to Sid, that he was to get right off the day he married her."

"An' Sid'll get it—bet yer life he will—fer I ain't got no son no more. A sneakin' hulk that leaves me with my wheat standin' an' goes over to help that Methodist of a Willson is no son of mine. I ain't never had a son, and you ain't, neither; remember that, Marthy—don't you ever let me ketch you goin' a-near them. We're done with Sam an' his missus. You jes' make a note of that." And old Billy flung out to his fields like a general whose forces had fled.

It was but a tiny, two-room shack, away up in the back lots, that Sam was able to get for Della, but no wayfarer ever passed up the side road but they heard her clear, young voice singing like a thrush; no one ever met Sam but he ceased whistling only to greet them. He proved invaluable to Mr. Willson, for after the harvest was in and the threshing over, there was the root crop and the apple crop, and eventually Mr. Willson hired him for the entire year. Della, to the surprise of the neighborhood, kept on with her school until Christmas.

"She's teachin' instid of keepin' Sam's house, jes' to git money fer finery, you bet!" sneered old Billy. But he never knew that every copper for the extra term was put carefully away, and was paid out for a whole year's rent in advance on a gray little two-room house, and paid by a very proud little yellow-haired bride. She had insisted upon this before her marriage, for she laughingly said, "No wife ever gets her way afterwards."

"I'm not good at butter-making, Sam," she said, "but I *can* make money teaching, and for this first year *I* pay the rent." And she did.

And the sweet, brief year swung on through its seasons, until one brown September morning the faint cry of a little human lamb floated through the open window of the small gray house on the back lots. Sam did not go to Willson's to work that day, but stayed at home, playing the part of

a big, joyful, clumsy nurse, his roughened hands gentle and loving, his big rugged heart bursting with happiness. It was twilight, and the gray shadows were creeping into the bare little room, touching with feathery fingers a tangled mop of yellow curls that aureoled a pillowed head that was not now filled with thoughts of Tennyson and Emerson and frilly muslin shirtwaists. That pretty head held but two realities—Sammy, whistling robin-like as he made tea in the kitchen, and the little human lamb hugged up on her arm.

But suddenly the whistling ceased, and Sammy's voice, thrilling with joy, exclaimed:

"Oh, mother!"

"Mrs. Willson sent word to me. Your father's gone to the village, and I ran away, Sammy boy," whispered Mrs. Norris, eagerly. "I just ran away. Where's Della and—the baby?"

"In here, mother, and—bless you for coming!" said the big fellow, stepping softly towards the bedroom. But his mother was there before him, her arms slipping tenderly about the two small beings on the bed.

"It wasn't my fault, daughter," she said, tremulously.

"I know it," faintly smiled Della. "Just these last few hours I know I'd stand by this baby boy of mine here until the Judgment Day, and so I now know it must have nearly broken your heart not to stand by Sammy."

"Well, grandmother!" laughed Sam, "what do you think of the new Norris?"

"Grandmother?" gasped Mrs. Norris. "Why, Sammy, *am* I a *grandmother?* Grandmother to this little sweetheart?" And the proud old arms lifted the wee "new Norris" right up from its mother's arms, and every tiny toe and finger was kissed and crooned over, while Sam shyly winked at Della and managed to whisper, "You'll see, girl, that dad will come around now; but he can just keep out of *our house.* There are two of us that can be harsh. I'm not going to come at *his* first whistle."

Della smiled to herself, but said nothing. Much wisdom had come to her within the last year, within the last day—wisdom not acquired within the covers of books, nor yet beneath college roofs, and one truth she had mastered long ago—that

> "To help and to heal a sorrow
> Love and silence are always best."

But late that night, when Martha Norris returned home, another storm broke above her hapless head. Old Billy sat on the kitchen steps waiting for her, frowning, scowling, muttering. "Where have you been?" he demanded, glaring at her, although some inner instinct told him what her answer would be.

"I've been to Sammy's," she said, in a peculiarly still voice, "and I'm going again to-morrow." Then with shoulders more erect and eyes

calmer than they had been for many months, she continued: "And I'm going again the next day, and the next. Billy, you and I've got a grandson—a splendid, fair, strong boy, and—"

"What!" snapped old Billy. "A grandson! I got a grandson, an' no person told me afore? Not even that there sneak Sam, cuss him! He always was too consarned mean to live. A grandson? I'm a-goin' over termorrer, sure's I'm alive."

"No use for you to go, Billy," said Mrs. Norris, with marvellous diplomacy for such a simple, unworldly farmer's wife to suddenly acquire. "Sammy wouldn't let you set foot on his place. He wouldn't let you put an eye or a finger on that precious baby—not for the whole earth."

"What! Not *me,* the little chap's *grandfather?*" blurted old Billy in a rage. "I'm a-goin' to see that baby, that's all there is to it. I tell yer, I'm a-goin'."

"No use, father; you'll only make things worse," sighed Sam's mother, plaintively; but in her heart laughter gurgled like a spring. To the gift of diplomacy Mrs. Norris was fast adding the art of being an actress. "If you go there Sam'll set the dog on you. I *know* he will, from the way he was talking," she concluded.

"Oh! got a *dog,* have they? Well, I bet they've got no *cow,*" sneered Billy. Then after a meaning pause: "I say, Marthy, *have* they got a cow?"

"No," replied Mrs. Norris, shortly.

"*No cow*, an' a sick woman and a baby—*my* grandchild—in the house? Now ain't that jes' like that sneak Sam? They'll jes' kill that baby atween them, they're that igner'nt. Hev they got enny milk fer them two babbling kids, Della an' the baby—my grandchild?"

"No!" snapped Mrs. Norris, while through her mind echoed some terrifying lines she had heard as a child:

> "All liars dwell with him in hell,
> And many more who cursed and swore."

"An' there's that young Shorthorn of ours, Marthy. Couldn't we spare her?" he asked with a pathetic eagerness. "We've got eight other cows to milk. Can't we spare her? If you think Sam'll set the dog on *me*, I'll have her driv over in the mornin'. Jim'll take her."

"I don't think it's any use, Bill; but you can try it," remarked Mrs. Norris, her soul singing within her like a celestial choir.

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"Where are you driving that cow to?" yelled Sam from the kitchen door, at sunrise the following morning. "Take her out of there! You're driving her into my yard, right over my cabbages."

But Jim, the Norris' hired man, only grinned, and proceeding with his driving, yelled back:

"Cow's yourn, Sam. Yer old man sent it—a present to yer missus and the babby."

"You take and drive that cow back again!" roared Sam. "And tell my dad I won't have hide nor hair of her on my place."

Back went the cow.

"Didn't I tell you?" mourned Mrs. Norris. "Sam's that stubborn and contrary. It's no use, Billy; he just doesn't care for his poor old father nor mother any more."

"By the jumping Jiminy Christmas! I'll *make* him care!" thundered old Billy. "I'm a-goin' ter see that grandchild of mine." Then followed a long silence.

"I say, Marthy, how are they fixed in the house?" he questioned, after many moments of apparently brown study.

"Pretty poor," answered Sam's mother, truthfully this time.

"Got a decent stove, an' bed, an' the like?" he finally asked.

"Stove seems to cook all right, but the bed looks just like straw tick—not much good, I'd say," responded Mrs. Norris, drearily.

"*A straw tick!*" fairly yelled old Billy. "A straw tick fer my grandson ter sleep on? Jim, you fetch that there cow here, right ter the side door."

"What are you going to do?" asked Martha, anxiously.

"I'll show yer!" blurted old Billy. And going to his own room, he dragged off all the pretty patchwork quilts above his neatly-made bed, grabbed up the voluminous feather-bed, staggered with it in his arms down the hall, through the side door, and flung it on to the back of the astonished cow.

"Now you, Jim, drive that there cow over to Sam's, and if you dare bring her back agin, I'll hide yer with the flail till yer can't stand up."

"Me drive that lookin' circus over to Sam's?" sneered Jim. "I'll quit yer place first. Yer kin do it yerself;" and the hired man turned on his lordly heel and slouched over to the barn.

"That'll be the best way, Billy," urged Sam's mother. "Do it yourself."

"I'll do it, too," old Billy growled. "I ain't afraid of no dog on four legs. Git on there, bossy! Git on, I say!" and the ridiculous cavalcade started forth.

For a moment Martha Norris watched the receding figure through blinding tears. "Oh, Sammy, I'm going to have you back again! I'm going to have my boy once more!" she half sobbed. Then sitting down on the doorsill, she laughed like a schoolgirl until the cow with her extraordinary burden, and old Billy in her wake, disappeared up the road.*

* This incident actually occurred on an Ontario farm within the circle of the author's acquaintance.

From the pillow, pretty Della could just see out of the low window, and her wide young eyes grew wider with amazement as the gate swung open and the "circus," as Jim called it, entered.

"Sammy!" she called, "Sammy! For goodness sake, what's that coming into our yard?"

Instantly Sam was at the door.

"Well, if that don't beat anything I ever saw!" he exclaimed. Then "like mother, like son," he, too, sat down on the doorsill and laughed as only youth and health and joy can laugh, for, heading straight for the door was the fat young Shorthorn, saddled with an enormous feather-bed, and plodding at her heels was old Billy Norris, grinning sheepishly.

It took just three seconds for the hands of father and son to meet. "How's my gal an' my grandson?" asked the old farmer, excitedly.

"Bully, just bully, both of them!" smiled Sam, proudly. Then more seriously, "Ah, dad, you old tornado, you! Here you fired thunder at us for a whole year, pretty near broke my mother's heart, and made my boy's little mother old before she ought to be. But you've quit storming now, dad. I know it from the look of you."

"Quit forever, Sam," replied old Billy, "fer these mother-wimmen don't never thrive where there's rough weather, somehow. They're all fer peace. They're worse than King Edward an' Teddy Roosevelt fer patchin' up rows, an' if they can't do it no other way, they jes' hike along with

a baby, sort o' treaty of peace like. Yes, I guess I thundered some; but, Sam, boy, there ain't a deal of harm in thunder—but *lightnin'*, now that's the worst, but I once heard a feller say that feathers was non-conductive." Then with a sly smile, " An' Sam, you'd better hustle an' git the gal an' the baby on ter this here feather-bed, or they may be in danger of gittin' struck, fer there's no tellin' but I may jes' start an' storm thunder an' *lightnin'* this time."

# A Pagan in St. Paul's Cathedral

**Iroquois Poetess' Impressions in London's Cathedral**

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It is a far cry from a wigwam to Westminster, from a prairie trail to the Tower Bridge, and London looks a strange place to the Red Indian whose eyes still see the myriad forest trees, even as they gaze across the Strand, and whose feet still feel the clinging moccasin even among the scores of clicking heels that hurry along the thoroughfares of this camping-ground of the paleface.

So this is the place where dwells the Great White Father, ruler of many lands, lodges, and tribes, in the hollow of whose hands is the peace that rests between the once hostile red man and white. They call him the King of England, but to us, the powerful Iroquois nation of the north, he is always the "Great White Father." For once he came to us in our far-off Canadian reserves, and with his own hand fastened decorations and medals on the buckskin coats of our oldest chiefs, just because they and their fathers used their tomahawks in battle in the cause of England.

So I, one of his loyal allies, have come to see his camp, known to the white man as London, his council which the whites call his Parliament, where his sachems and chiefs make the laws of his tribes, and to see his wigwam, known to the palefaces as Buckingham Palace, but to the red man as the "Tepee of the Great White Father." And this is what I see:—

### What the Indian Sees.

Lifting toward the sky are vast buildings of stone, not the same kind of stone from which my forefathers fashioned their carven pipes and corn-pounders, but a grayer, grimier rock that would not take the polish we give by fingers dipped in sturgeon oil, and long days of friction with fine sand and deer-hide.

I stand outside the great palace wigwam, the huge council-house by the river. My seeing eyes may mark them, but my heart's eyes are looking beyond all this wonderment, back to the land I have left behind me. I picture the tepees by the far Saskatchewan; there the tent poles, too, are lifting skyward, and the smoke ascending through them from the smouldering fires within curls softly on the summer air. Against the blurred sweep of horizon other camps etch their outlines, other bands of red men with their herds of wild cattle have sought the river lands. I hear the untamed hoofs thundering up the prairie trail.

But the prairie sounds are slipping away, and my ears catch other voices that rise above the ceaseless throb about me—voices that are clear, high, and calling; they float across the city like the music of a thousand birds of passage beating their wings through the night, crying and murmuring plaintively as they journey northward. They are the voices of St. Paul's calling, calling me—St. Paul's where the paleface worships the Great Spirit, and through whose portals he hopes to reach the happy hunting grounds.

### The Great Spirit.

As I entered its doorways it seemed to me to be the everlasting abiding-place of the white man's Great Spirit.

The music brooded everywhere. It beat in my ears like the far-off cadences of the Sault Ste. Marie rapids, that rise and leap and throb—like a storm hurling through the fir forest—like the distant rising of an Indian war-song; it swept up those mighty archways until the gray dome above me faded, and in its place the stars came out to look down, not on these paleface kneeling worshippers, but on a band of stalwart, sinewy, copper-coloured devotees, my own people in my own land, who also assembled to do honour to the Manitou of all nations.

The deep-throated organ and the boys' voices were gone; I heard instead the melancholy incan-

tations of our own pagan religionists. The beautiful dignity of our great sacrificial rites seemed to settle about me, to enwrap me in its garment of solemnity and primitive stateliness.

### Beat of the Drum.

The atmosphere pulsed with the beat of the Indian drum, the eerie penetrations of the turtle rattle that set the time of the dancers' feet. Dance? It is not a dance, that marvellously slow, serpentine-like figure with the soft swish, swish of moccasined feet, and the faint jingling of elks'-teeth bracelets, keeping rhythm with every footfall. It is not a dance, but an invocation of motion. Why may we not worship with the graceful movement of our feet? The paleface worships by moving his lips and tongue; the difference is but slight.

The altar-lights of St. Paul's glowed for me no more. In their place flared the camp fires of the Onondaga "long-house," and the resinous scent of the burning pine drifted across the fetid London air. I saw the tall, copper-skinned fire-keeper of the Iroquois council enter, the circle of light flung fitfully against the black surrounding woods. I have seen their white bishops, but none so regal, so august as he. His garb of fringed buckskin and ermine was no more grotesque than the vestments worn by the white preachers in high places; he did not carry a book or a shining

golden symbol, but from his splendid shoulders was suspended a pure white lifeless dog.

Into the red flame the strong hands gently lowered it, scores of reverent, blanketed figures stood silent, awed, for it is the highest, holiest festival of the year. Then the wild, strange chant arose—the great pagan ritual was being intoned by the fire-keeper, his weird, monotonous tones voicing this formula:

"The Great Spirit desires no human sacrifice, but we, His children, must give to Him that which is nearest our hearts and nearest our lives. Only the spotless and stainless can enter into His presence, only that which is purified by fire. So do we offer to Him this spotless, innocent animal —this white dog—a member of our household, a co-habitant of our wigwam, and on the smoke that arises from the purging fires will arise also the thanksgivings of all those who desire that the Great Spirit in His happy hunting grounds will forever smoke His pipe of peace, for peace is between Him and His children for all time."

The mournful voice ceases. Again the hollow pulsing of the Indian drum, the purring, flexible step of cushioned feet. I lift my head, which has been bowed on the chair before me. It is St. Paul's after all—and the clear boy-voices rise above the rich echoes of the organ.

# As It Was in the Beginning

THEY account for it by the fact that I am a Redskin, but I am something else, too—I am a woman.

I remember the first time I saw him. He came up the trail with some Hudson's Bay trappers, and they stopped at the door of my father's tepee. He seemed even then, fourteen years ago, an old man; his hair seemed just as thin and white, his hands just as trembling and fleshless as they were a month since, when I saw him for what I pray his God is the last time.

My father sat in the tepee, polishing buffalo horns and smoking; my mother, wrapped in her blanket, crouched over her quill-work, on the buffalo-skin at his side; I was lounging at the doorway, idling, watching, as I always watched, the thin, distant line of sky and prairie; wondering, as I always wondered, what lay beyond it. Then he came, this gentle old man with his white hair and thin, pale face. He wore a long black coat, which I now know was the sign of his office, and he carried a black leather-covered book, which, in all the years I have known him, I have never seen him without.

The trappers explained to my father who he was, the Great Teacher, the heart's Medicine Man, the "Blackcoat" we had heard of, who brought peace where there was war, and the magic of whose black book brought greater things than all the Happy Hunting Grounds of our ancestors.

He told us many things that day, for he could speak the Cree tongue, and my father listened, and listened, and when at last they left us, my father said for him to come and sit within the tepee again.

He came, all the time he came, and my father welcomed him, but my mother always sat in silence at work with the quills; my mother never liked the Great "Blackcoat."

His stories fascinated me. I used to listen intently to the tale of the strange new place he called "heaven," of the gold crown, of the white dress, of the great music; and then he would tell of that other strange place —hell. My father and I hated it; we feared it, we dreamt of it, we trembled at it. Oh, if the "Blackcoat" would only cease to talk of it! Now I know he saw its effect upon us, and he used it as a whip to lash us into his new religion, but even then my mother must have known, for each time he left the tepee she would watch him going slowly away across the prairie; then when he was disappearing into the far horizon she would laugh scornfully, and say:

"If the white man made this Blackcoat's hell, let him go to it. It is for the man who found it first. No hell for Indians, just Happy Hunting Grounds. Blackcoat can't scare me."

And then, after weeks had passed, one day as he stood at the tepee door he laid his white, old hand on my head and said to my father: "Give me this little girl, chief. Let me take her to the mission school; let me keep her, and teach her of the great God and His eternal heaven. She will grow to be a noble woman, and return perhaps to bring her people to the Christ."

My mother's eyes snapped. "No," she said. It was the first word she ever spoke to the "Blackcoat." My father sat and smoked. At the end of a half-hour he said:

"I am an old man, Blackcoat. I shall not leave the God of my fathers. I like not your strange God's ways—all of them. I like not His two new places for me when I am dead. Take the child, Blackcoat, and save her from hell."

* * * * * * * *

The first grief of my life was when we reached the mission. They took my buckskin dress off, saying I was now a little Christian girl and must dress like all the white people at the mission. Oh, how I hated that stiff new calico dress and those leather shoes. But, little as I was, I said nothing, only thought of the time when I

should be grown, and do as my mother did, and wear the buckskins and the blanket.

My next serious grief was when I began to speak the English, that they forbade me to use any Cree words whatever. The rule of the school was that any child heard using its native tongue must get a slight punishment. I never understood it, I cannot understand it now, why the use of my dear Cree tongue could be a matter for correction or an action deserving punishment.

She was strict, the matron of the school, but only justly so, for she had a heart and a face like her brother's, the "Blackcoat." I had long since ceased to call him that. The trappers at the post called him "St. Paul," because, they told me, of his self-sacrificing life, his kindly deeds, his rarely beautiful old face; so I, too, called him "St. Paul," though oftener "Father Paul," though he never liked the latter title, for he was a Protestant. But as I was his pet, his darling of the whole school, he let me speak of him as I would, knowing it was but my heart speaking in love. His sister was a widow, and mother to a laughing yellow-haired little boy of about my own age, who was my constant playmate and who taught me much of English in his own childish way. I used to be fond of this child, just as I was fond of his mother and of his uncle, my "Father Paul," but as my girlhood passed away, as womanhood came upon me, I got strangely wearied of them all; I longed, oh, God,

how I longed for the old wild life! It came with my womanhood, with my years.

What mattered it to me now that they had taught me all their ways?—their tricks of dress, their reading, their writing, their books. What mattered it that "Father Paul" loved me, that the traders at the post called me pretty, that I was a pet of all, from the factor to the poorest trapper in the service? I wanted my own people, my own old life, my blood called out for it, but they always said I must not return to my father's tepee. I heard them talk amongst themselves of keeping me away from pagan influences; they told each other that if I returned to the prairies, the tepees, I would degenerate, slip back to paganism, as other girls had done; marry, perhaps, with a pagan—and all their years of labor and teaching would be lost.

I said nothing, but I waited. And then one night the feeling overcame me. I was in the Hudson's Bay store when an Indian came in from the north with a large pack of buckskin. As they unrolled it a dash of its insinuating odor filled the store. I went over and leaned above the skins a second, then buried my face in them, swallowing, drinking the fragrance of them, that went to my head like wine. Oh, the wild wonder of that wood-smoked tan, the subtilty of it, the untamed smell of it! I drank it into my lungs, my innermost being was saturated with it, till my mind reeled and my heart seemed twisted

with a physical agony. My childhood recollections rushed upon me, devoured me. I left the store in a strange, calm frenzy, and going rapidly to the mission house I confronted my Father Paul and demanded to be allowed to go "home," if only for a day. He received the request with the same refusal and the same gentle sigh that I had so often been greeted with, but *this* time the desire, the smoke-tan, the heart-ache, never lessened.

Night after night I would steal away by myself and go to the border of the village to watch the sun set in the foothills, to gaze at the far line of sky and prairie, to long and long for my father's lodge. And Laurence—always Laurence—my fair-haired, laughing, child playmate, would come calling and calling for me: "Esther, where are you? We miss you; come in, Esther, come in with me." And if I did not turn at once to him and follow, he would come and place his strong hands on my shoulders and laugh into my eyes and say, "Truant, truant, Esther; can't *we* make you happy?"

My old child playmate had vanished years ago. He was a tall, slender young man now, handsome as a young chief, but with laughing blue eyes, and always those yellow curls about his temples. He was my solace in my half-exile, my comrade, my brother, until one night it was, "Esther, Esther, can't *I* make you happy?"

I did not answer him; only looked out across

the plains and thought of the tepees. He came close, close. He locked his arms about me, and with my face pressed up to his throat he stood silent. I felt the blood from my heart sweep to my very finger-tips. I loved him. O God, how I loved him! In a wild, blind instant it all came, just because he held me so and was whispering brokenly, "Don't leave me, don't leave me, Esther; *my* Esther, my child-love, my playmate, my girl-comrade, my little Cree sweetheart, will you go away to your people, or stay, stay for me, for my arms, as I have you now?"

No more, no more the tepees; no more the wild stretch of prairie, the intoxicating fragrance of the smoke-tanned buckskin; no more the bed of buffalo hide, the soft, silent moccasin; no more the dark faces of my people, the dulcet cadence of the sweet Cree tongue—only this man, this fair, proud, tender man who held me in his arms, in his heart. My soul prayed his great white God, in that moment, that He let me have only this. It was twilight when we re-entered the mission gate. We were both excited, feverish. Father Paul was reading evening prayers in the large room beyond the hallway; his soft, saint-like voice stole beyond the doors, like a benediction upon us. I went noiselessly upstairs to my own room and sat there undisturbed for hours.

The clock downstairs struck one, startling me from my dreams of happiness, and at the same moment a flash of light attracted me. My room

was in an angle of the building, and my window looked almost directly down into those of Father Paul's study, into which at that instant he was entering, carrying a lamp. "Why, Laurence," I heard him exclaim, "what are you doing here? I thought, my boy, you were in bed hours ago."

"No, uncle, not in bed, but in dreamland," replied Laurence, arising from the window, where evidently he, too, had spent the night hours as I had done.

Father Paul fumbled about a moment, found his large black book, which for once he seemed to have got separated from, and was turning to leave, when the curious circumstance of Laurence being there at so unusual an hour seemed to strike him anew. "Better go to sleep, my son," he said simply, then added curiously, "Has anything occurred to keep you up?"

Then Laurence spoke: "No, uncle, only—only, I'm happy, that's all."

Father Paul stood irresolute. Then: "It is ——?"

"Esther," said Laurence quietly, but he was at the old man's side, his hand was on the bent old shoulder, his eyes proud and appealing.

Father Paul set the lamp on the table, but, as usual, one hand held that black book, the great text of his life. His face was paler than I had ever seen it—graver.

"Tell me of it," he requested.

I leaned far out of my window and watched them both. I listened with my very heart, for Laurence was telling him of me, of his love, of the new-found joy of that night.

"You have said nothing of marriage to her?" asked Father Paul.

"Well—no; but she surely understands that—"

"Did you speak of *marriage?*" repeated Father Paul, with a harsh ring in his voice that was new to me.

"No, uncle, but——"

"Very well, then; very well."

There was a brief silence. Laurence stood staring at the old man as though he were a stranger; he watched him push a large chair up to the table, slowly seat himself; then mechanically following his movements, he dropped on to a lounge. The old man's head bent low, but his eyes were bright and strangely fascinating. He began:

"Laurence, my boy, your future is the dearest thing to me of all earthly interests. Why, you *can't* marry this girl—no, no, sit, sit until I have finished," he added, with raised voice, as Laurence sprang up, remonstrating. "I have long since decided that you marry well; for instance, the Hudson's Bay factor's daughter."

Laurence broke into a fresh, rollicking laugh. "What, uncle," he said, "little Ida McIntosh? Marry that little yellow-haired fluff ball, that kitten, that pretty little dolly?"

"Stop," said Father Paul. Then with a low, soft persuasiveness, "She is *white,* Laurence."

My lover started. "Why, uncle, what do you mean?" he faltered.

"Only this, my son: poor Esther comes of uncertain blood; would it do for you—the missionary's nephew, and adopted son, you might say—to marry the daughter of a pagan Indian? Her mother is hopelessly uncivilized; her father has a dash of French somewhere—half-breed, you know, my boy, half-breed." Then, with still lower tone and half-shut, crafty eyes, he added: "The blood is a bad, bad mixture, *you* know that; you know, too, that I am very fond of the girl, poor dear Esther. I have tried to separate her from evil pagan influences; she is the daughter of the Church; I want her to have no other parent; but you never can tell what lurks in *a caged animal that has once been wild.* My whole heart is with the Indian people, my son; my whole heart, my whole life, has been devoted to bringing them to Christ, *but it is a different thing to marry with one of them.*"

His small old eyes were riveted on Laurence like a hawk's on a rat. My heart lay like ice in my bosom.

Laurence, speechless and white, stared at him breathlessly.

"Go away somewhere," the old man was urging; "to Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal; forget her, then come back to Ida McIntosh. A union of the

Church and the Hudson's Bay will mean great things, and may ultimately result in my life's ambition, the civilization of this entire tribe, that we have worked so long to bring to God."

I listened, sitting like one frozen. Could those words have been uttered by my venerable teacher, by him whom I revered as I would one of the saints in his own black book? Ah, there was no mistaking it. My white father, my life-long friend who pretended to love me, to care for my happiness, was urging the man I worshipped to forget me, to marry with the factor's daughter—because of what? Of my red skin; my good, old, honest pagan mother; my confiding French-Indian father. In a second all the care, the hollow love he had given me since my childhood, were as things that never existed. I hated that old mission priest as I hated his white man's hell. I hated his long, white hair; I hated his thin, white hands; I hated his body, his soul, his voice, his black book—oh, how I hated the very atmosphere of him.

Laurence sat motionless, his face buried in his hands, but the old man continued, "No, no; not the child of that pagan mother; you can't trust her, my son. What would you do with a wife who might any day break from you to return to her prairies and her buckskins? *You can't trust her.*" His eyes grew smaller, more glittering, more fascinating then, and leaning with an odd, secret sort of movement towards Laurence, he

almost whispered, "Think of her silent ways, her noiseless step; the girl glides about like an apparition; her quick fingers, her wild longings —I don't know why, but with all my fondness for her, she reminds me sometimes of a strange —*snake.*"

Laurence shuddered, lifted his face, and said hoarsely: "You're right, uncle; perhaps I'd better not; I'll go away, I'll forget her, and then—well, then—yes, you are right, it *is* a different thing to marry one of them." The old man arose. His feeble fingers still clasped his black book; his soft white hair clung about his forehead like that of an Apostle; his eyes lost their peering, crafty expression; his bent shoulders resumed the dignity of a minister of the living God; he was the picture of what the traders called him— "St. Paul."

"Good-night, son," he said.

"Good-night, uncle, and thank you for bringing me to myself."

They were the last words I ever heard uttered by either that old arch-fiend or his weak, miserable kinsman. Father Paul turned and left the room. I watched his withered hand—the hand I had so often felt resting on my head in holy benedictions—clasp the door-knob, turn it slowly, then, with bowed head and his pale face wrapped in thought, he left the room—left it with the mad venom of my hate pursuing him like the very Evil One he taught me of.

What were his years of kindness and care now? What did I care for his God, his heaven, his hell? He had robbed me of my native faith, of my parents, of my people, of this last, this life of love that would have made a great, good woman of me. God! how I hated him!

I crept to the closet in my dark little room. I felt for a bundle I had not looked at for years —yes, it was there, the buckskin dress I had worn as a little child when they brought me to the mission. I tucked it under my arm and descended the stairs noiselessly. I would look into the study and speak good-bye to Laurence; then I would——

I pushed open the door. He was lying on the couch where a short time previously he had sat, white and speechless, listening to Father Paul. I moved towards him softly. God in heaven, he was already asleep. As I bent over him the fullness of his perfect beauty impressed me for the first time; his slender form, his curving mouth that almost laughed even in sleep, his fair, tossed hair, his smooth, strong-pulsing throat. God! how I loved him!

Then there arose the picture of the factor's daughter. I hated her. I hated her baby face, her yellow hair, her whitish skin. "She shall not marry him," my soul said. "I will kill him first—kill his beautiful body, his lying, false heart." Something in my heart seemed to speak; it said over and over

again, "Kill him, kill him; she will never have him then. Kill him. It will break Father Paul's heart and blight his life. He has killed the best of you, of your womanhood; kill *his* best, his pride, his hope—his sister's son, his nephew Laurence." But how? how?

What had that terrible old man said I was like? A *strange snake.* A snake? The idea wound itself about me like the very coils of a serpent. What was this in the beaded bag of my buckskin dress? this little thing rolled in tan that my mother had given me at parting with the words, "Don't touch much, but some time maybe you want it!" Oh! I knew well enough what it was—a small flint arrow-head dipped in the venom of some *strange snake.*

I knelt beside him and laid my hot lips on his hand. I worshipped him, oh, how, how I worshipped him! Then again the vision of *her* baby face, *her* yellow hair—I scratched his wrist twice with the arrow-tip. A single drop of red blood oozed up; he stirred. I turned the lamp down and slipped out of the room—out of the house.

* * * * * * * * *

I dream nightly of the horrors of the white man's hell. Why did they teach me of it, only to fling me into it?

Last night as I crouched beside my mother on the buffalo-hide, Dan Henderson, the trapper,

came in to smoke with my father. He said old Father Paul was bowed with grief, that with my disappearance I was suspected, but that there was no proof. Was it not merely a snake bite?

They account for it by the fact that I am a Redskin.

They seem to have forgotten I am a woman.

# The Legend of Lillooet Falls

No one could possibly mistake the quiet little tap at the door. It could be given by no other hand west of the Rockies save that of my old friend The Klootchman. I dropped a lap full of work and sprang to open the door; for the slanting rains were chill outside, albeit the December grass was green and the great masses of English ivy clung wet and fresh as in summer about the low stone wall that ran between my verandah and the street.

"Kla-how-ya, Tillicum," I greeted, dragging her into the warmth and comfort of my "den," and relieving her of her inseparable basket, and removing her rain-soaked shawl. Before she spoke she gave that peculiar gesture common to the Indian woman from the Atlantic to the Pacific. She lifted both hands and with each forefinger smoothed gently along her forehead from the parting of her hair to the temples. It is the universal habit of the red woman, and simply means a desire for neatness in her front locks.

I busied myself immediately with the teakettle, for, like all her kind, The Klootchman dearly loves her tea.

The old woman's eyes sparkled as she watched the welcome brewing, while she chatted away in half English, half Chinook, telling me of her doings in all these weeks that I had not seen her. But it was when I handed her a huge old-fashioned breakfast cup fairly brimming with tea as strong as lye that she really described her journeyings.

She had been north to the Skeena River, south to the great "Fair" at Seattle, but, best of all seemingly to her, was her trip into the interior. She had been up the trail to Lillooet in the great "Cariboo" country. It was my turn then to have sparkling eyes, for I traversed that inexpressibly beautiful trail five years ago, and the delight of that journey will remain with me for all time.

"And, oh! Tillicum," I cried, "have your good brown ears actually listened to the call of the falls across the cañon—the Falls of Lillooet?"

"My ears have heard them whisper, laugh, weep," she replied in the Chinook.

"Yes," I answered, "they do all those things. They have magic voices—those dear, far-off falls!"

At the word "magic" her keen eyes snapped, she set her empty cup aside and looked at me solemnly.

"Then you know the story—the strange tale?" she asked almost whisperingly.

I shook my head. This was always the crucial moment with my Klootchman, when her voice lowers, and she asks if you know things. You must be diplomatic, and never question her in turn. If you do her lips will close in unbreakable silence.

"I have heard no story, but I have heard the Falls 'whisper, laugh and weep.' That is enough for me," I said, with seeming indifference.

"What do you see when you look at them from across the cañon?" she asked. "Do they look to you like anything else but falling water?"

I thought for a moment before replying. Memory seemed to hold up an indistinct photograph of towering fir-crested heights, where through a broken ridge of rock a shower of silvery threads cascaded musically down, down, down, until they lost themselves in the mighty Fraser, that hurled itself through the yawning cañon stretched at my feet. I have never seen such slender threads of glowing tissue save on early morning cobwebs at sun-up.

"The Falls look like cobwebs," I said, as the memory touched me. "Millions of fine misty cobwebs woven together."

"Then the legend must be true," she uttered, half to herself. I slipped down on my treasured wolf-skin rug near her chair, and with hands locked about my knees, sat in silence, knowing it was the one and only way to lure her to speech. She arose, helped herself to more tea, and with

the toe of her beaded moccasin idly stroked one of the wolf-skin paws. "Yes," she said, with some decision, "the Indian men of magic say that the falls are cobwebs twisted and braided together."

I nodded, but made no comment; then her voice droned into the broken English, that, much as I love it, I must leave to the reader's imagination. "Indian mothers are strange," she began. I nodded again.

"Yes, they are strange, and there is a strange tie between them and their children. The men of magic say they can *see* that tie, though you and I cannot. It is thin, fine, silvery as a cobweb, but strong as the ropes of wild vine that swing down the great cañons. No storm ever breaks those vines; the tempests that drag the giant firs and cedars up by their roots, snap their branches and break their boles, never break the creeping vines. They may be torn from their strongholds, but in the young months of the summer the vine will climb up, and cling again. *Nothing* breaks it. So is the cobweb tie the Men of Magic see between the Indian mother and her child.

"There was a time when no falls leapt and sang down the heights at Lillooet, and in those days our men were very wild and warlike; but the women were gentle and very beautiful, and they loved and lived and bore children as women have done before, and since.

"But there was one, more gentle, more beautiful than all others of the tribe. 'Be-be,' our people call her; it is the Chinook word for 'a kiss.' None of our people knew her real name; but it was a kiss of hers that made this legend, so as 'Be-be' we speak of her.

"She was a mother-woman, but save for one beautiful girl-child, her family of six were all boys, splendid, brave boys, too, but this one treasured girl-child they called 'Morning-mist.' She was little and frail and beautiful, like the clouds one sees at daybreak circling about the mountain peaks. Her father and her brothers loved her, but the heart of Be-be, her mother, seemed wrapped round and about that misty-eyed child.

"'I love you,' the mother would say many times a day, as she caught the girl-child in her arms. 'And I love you,' the girl-child would answer, resting for a moment against the warm shoulder. 'Little Flower,' the woman would murmur, 'thou art morning to me, thou art golden mid-day, thou art slumbrous nightfall to my heart.'

"So these two loved and lived, mother and daughter, made for each other, shaped into each other's lives as the moccasin is shaped to the foot.

"Then came that long, shadowed, sunless day, when Be-be, returning from many hours of ollallie picking, her basket filled to the brim with rich fruit, her heart reaching forth to her home even

before her swift feet could traverse the trail, found her husband and her boys stunned with a dreadful fear, searching with wild eyes, hurrying feet, and grief-wrung hearts for her little 'Morning-child,' who had wandered into the forest while her brothers played—the forest which was deep and dark and dangerous,—and had not returned."

The Klootchman's voice ceased. For a long moment she gazed straight before her, then looking at me said:

"You have heard the Falls of Lillooet weep?" I nodded.

"It is the weeping of that Indian mother, sobbing through the centuries, that you hear." She uttered the words with a cadence of grief in her voice.

"Hours, nights, days, they searched for the Morning-child," she continued. "And each moment of that unending agony to the mother-woman is repeated to-day in the call, the wail, the everlasting sobbing of the falls. At night the wolves howled up the cañon. 'God of my fathers, keep safe my Morning-child,' the mother would implore. In the glare of day eagles poised, and vultures wheeled above the forest, their hungry claws, their unblinking eyes, their beaks of greed shining in the sunlight. 'God of my fathers, keep safe my Morning-child' was again wrung from the mother's lips. For one long moon, that dawned, and shone and darkened, that mother's

heart lived out its torture. Then one pale day-break a great fleet of canoes came down the Frazer River. Those that paddled were of a strange tribe, they spoke in a strange tongue, but their hearts were human, and their skins were of the rich copper-color of the Upper Lillooet country. As they steered downstream, running the rapids, braving the whirlpools, they chanted, in monotone:

"'We have a lost child,
A beautiful lost child.
We love this lost child,
But the heart of the child
Calls the mother of the child.
Come and claim this lost child.'

"The music of the chant was most beautiful, but no music in the world of the white man's Tyee could equal that which rang through the heart of Be-be, the Indian mother-woman.

"Heart upon heart, lips upon lips, the Morning-child and the mother caught each other in embrace. The strange tribe told of how they had found the girl-child wandering fearfully in the forest, crouching from the claws of eagles, shrinking from the horror of wolves, but the mother with her regained treasure in her arms begged them to cease their tales. 'I have gone through agonies enough, oh, my friends,' she cried aloud. 'Let me rest from torture now.' Then her people came and made a great feast and

potlatch for this strange Upper Lillooet tribe, and at the feast Be-be arose, and, lifting the girl-child to her shoulder, she commanded silence and spoke:

"'O Sagalie Tyee (God of all the earth), You have given back to me my treasure; take my tears, my sobs, my happy laughter, my joy—take the cobweb chains that bind my Morning-child and me—make them sing to others, that they may know my gratitude. O Sagalie Tyee, make them sing.' As she spoke, she kissed the child. At that moment the Falls of Lillooet came like a million cobweb strands, dashing and gleaming down the cañon, sobbing, laughing, weeping, calling, singing. You have listened to them."

The Klootchman's voice was still. Outside, the rains still slanted gently, like a whispering echo of the far-away falls. "Thank you, Tillicum of mine; it is a beautiful legend," I said. She did not reply until, wrapped about in her shawl, she had clasped my hand in good-bye. At the door she paused, "Yes," she said—"and it is true." I smiled to myself. I love my Klootchman. She is so *very* Indian.

# Her Majesty's Guest

[Author's Note.—The "Onondaga Jam" occurred late in the seventies, and this tale is founded upon actual incidents in the life of the author's father, who was Forest Warden on the Indian Reserve.]

I have never been a good man, but then I have never pretended to be one, and perhaps that at least will count in my favor in the day when the great dividends are declared.

I have been what is called "well brought up" and I would give some years of my life to possess now the money spent on my education; how I came to drop from what I should have been to what I am would scarcely interest anyone—if indeed I were capable of detailing the process, which I am not. I suppose I just rolled leisurely down hill like many another fellow.

My friends, however, still credit me with one virtue; that is an absolute respect for my neighbor's wife, a feeling which, however, does not extend to his dollars. His money is mine if I can get it, and to do myself justice I prefer getting it from him honestly, at least without sufficient dishonesty to place me behind prison bars.

Some experience has taught me that when a man is reduced to getting his living, as I do, by side issues and small deals, there is no better locality for him to operate than around the borders of some Indian Reserve.

The pagan Indian is an unsuspicious fool. You can do him up right and left. The Christian Indian is as sharp as a fox, and with a little gloved handling he will always go in with you on a few lumber and illicit whiskey deals, which means that you have the confidence of his brethren and their dollars at the same time.

I had outwitted the law for six years. I had smuggled more liquor into the Indian Bush on the Grand River Reserve and drawn more timber out of it to the Hamilton and Brantford markets than any forty dealers put together. Gradually the law thinned the whole lot out—all but me; but I was slippery as an eel and my bottles of whiskey went on, and my loads of ties and timber came off, until every officer and preacher in the place got up and demanded an inspection.

The Government at Ottawa awoke, stretched, yawned, then printed some flaring posters and stuck them around the border villages. The posters were headed by a big print of the British Coat of Arms, and some large type beneath announced terrible fines and heavy imprisonments for anyone caught hauling Indian timber off the Reserve, or hauling whiskey on to it. Then

the Government rubbed its fat palms together, settled itself in its easy chair, and snored again.

I? Oh, I went on with my operations.

And at Christmas time Tom Barrett arrived on the scene. Not much of an event, you'd say if you saw him, still less if you heard him. According to himself, he knew everything and could do everything in the known world; he was just twenty-two and as obnoxiously fresh a thing as ever boasted itself before older men.

He was the old missionary's son and had come up from college at Montreal to help his father preach salvation to the Indians on Sundays, and to swagger around week-days in his brand new clerical-cut coat and white tie.

He enjoyed what is called, I believe, "deacon's orders." They tell me he was recently "priested," to use their straight English Church term, and is now parson of a swell city church. Well! they can have him. I'll never split on him, but I could tell them some things about Tom Barrett that would soil his surplice—at least in my opinion, but you never can be sure when even religious people will make a hero out of a rogue.

The first time I ever saw him he came into "Jake's" one night, quite late. We were knocked clean dumb. "Jake's" isn't the place you would count on seeing a clerical-cut coat in.

It's not a thoroughly disreputable place, for Jake has a decent enough Indian wife; but he happens also to have a cellar which has a hard

name for illicit-whiskey supplies, though never once has the law, in its numerous and unannounced visits to the shanty, ever succeeded in discovering barrel or bottle. I consider myself a pretty smart man, but Jake is cleverer than I am.

When young Barrett came in that night, there was a clatter of hiding cups. "Hello, boys," he said, and sat down wearily opposite me, leaning his arms on the table between us like one utterly done out.

Jake, it seemed, had the distinction of knowing him; so he said kind of friendly-like,

"Hello, parson—sick?"

"Sick? Sick nothing," said Barrett, "except sick to death of this place. And don't 'parson' me! I'm 'parson' on Sundays; the rest of the six days I'm Tom Barrett—Tom, if you like."

We were dead silent. For myself, I thought the fellow clean crazy; but the next moment he had turned half around, and with a quick, soft, coaxing movement, for all the world like a woman, he slipped his arm around Jake's shoulders, and said, "Say, Jake, don't let the fellows mind me," Then in a lower tone—*"What have you got to drink?"*

Jake went white-looking and began to talk of some cider he'd got in the cellar; but Barrett interrupted with, "Look here, Jake, just drop that rot; I know all about *you*." He tipped a half wink at the rest of us, but laid his fingers

across his lips. "Come, old man," he wheedled like a girl, "you don't know what it is to be dragged away from college and buried alive in this Indian bush. The governor's good enough, you know—treats me white and all that—but you know what he is on whiskey. I tell you I've got a throat as long and dry as a fence rail—"

No one spoke.

"You'll save my life if you do," he added, crushing a bank note into Jake's hand.

Jake looked at me. The same thought flashed on us both; if we could get this church student on our side—Well! Things would be easy enough and public suspicion never touch us. Jake turned, resurrected the hidden cups, and went down cellar.

"You're Dan McLeod, aren't you?" suggested Barrett, leaning across the table and looking sharply at me.

"That's me," I said in turn, and sized him up. I didn't like his face; it was the undeniable face of a liar—small, uncertain eyes, set together close like those of a fox, a thin nose, a narrow, womanish chin that accorded with his girlish actions of coaxing, and a mouth I didn't quite understand.

Jake had come up with the bottle, but before he could put it on the table Barrett snatched it like a starving dog would a hunk of meat.

He peered at the label, squinting his foxy eyes, then laughed up at Jake.

"I hope you don't sell the Indians *this*," he said, tapping the capsule.

No, Jake never sold a drop of whiskey to Indians,—the law, you know, was very strict and—

"Oh, I don't care whatever else you sell them," said Barrett, "but their red throats would never appreciate fine twelve-year-old like this. Come, boys."

We came.

"So you're Dan McLeod," he continued after the first long pull, "I've heard about you, too. You've got a deck of cards in your pocket—haven't you? Let's have a game."

I looked at him, and though, as I said in the beginning, I'm not a good man, I felt honestly sorry for the old missionary and his wife at that moment.

"It's no use," said the boy, reading my hesitation. "I've broken loose. I must have a slice of the old college life, just for to-night."

I decided the half-cut of Indian blood on his mother's side was showing itself; it was just enough to give Tom a good red flavoring and a rare taste for gaming and liquor.

We played until daylight, when Barrett said he must make his sneak home, and reaching for his wide-brimmed, soft felt preacher's hat, left—having pocketed twenty-six of our good dollars, swallowed unnumbered cups of twelve-year-old

and won the combined respect of everyone at Jake's.

The next Sunday Jake went to church out of curiosity. He said Tom Barrett "officiated" in a surplice as white as snow and with a face as sinless as your mother's. He preached most eloquently against the terrible evil of the illicit liquor trade, and implored his Indian flock to resist this greatest of all pitfalls. Jake even seemed impressed as he told us.

But Tom Barrett's "breaking loose for once" was like any other man's. Night after night saw him at Jake's, though he never played to win after that first game. As the weeks went on, he got anxious-looking; his clerical coat began to grow seedy, his white ties uncared for; he lost his fresh, cheeky talk, and the climax came late in March when one night I found him at Jake's sitting alone, his face bowed down on the table above his folded arms, and something so disheartened in his attitude that I felt sorry for the boy. Perhaps it was that I was in trouble myself that day; my biggest "deal" of the season had been scented by the officers and the chances were they would come on and seize the five barrels of whiskey I had been as many weeks smuggling into the Reserve. However it was, I put my hand on his shoulder, and told him to brace up, asking at the same time what was wrong.

"Money," he answered, looking up with kind of haggard eyes. "Dan, I must have money. City

bills, college debts—everything has rolled up against me. I daren't tell the governor, and he couldn't help me anyway, and I can't go back for another term owing every man in my class." He looked suicidal. And then I made the plunge I'd been thinking on all day.

"Would a hundred dollars be any good to you?" I eyed him hard as I said it, and sat down in my usual place, opposite him.

"Good?" he exclaimed, half rising. "It would be an eternal godsend." His foxy eyes glittered. I thought I detected greed in them; perhaps it was only relief.

I told him it was his if he would only help me, and making sure we were quite alone, I ran off a hurried account of my "deal," then proposed that he should "accidentally" meet the officers near the border, ring in with them as a parson would be likely to do, tell them he suspicioned the whiskey was directly at the opposite side of the Reserve to where I really had stored it, get them wild-goose chasing miles away, and give me a chance to clear the stuff and myself as well; in addition to the hundred I would give him twenty per cent. on the entire deal. He changed color and the sweat stood out on his forehead.

"One hundred dollars this time to-morrow night," I said. He didn't move. "And twenty per cent. One hundred dollars this time to-morrow night," I repeated.

He began to weaken. I lit my pipe and looked indifferent, though I knew I was a lost man if he refused—and informed. Suddenly he stretched his hand across the table, impulsively, and closed it over mine. I knew I had him solid then.

"Dan," he choked up, "it's a terrible thing for a divinity student to do; but—" his fingers tightened nervously. "I'm with you!" Then in a moment, "Find some whiskey, Dan. I'm done up."

He soon got braced enough to ask me who was in the deal, and what timber we expected to trade for. When I told him Lige Smith and Jack Jackson were going to help me, he looked scared and asked me if I thought they would split on him. He was so excited I thought him cowardly, but the poor devil had reason enough, I supposed, to want to keep the transaction from the ears of his father, or worse still—the bishop. He seemed easier when I assured him the boys were square, and immensely gratified at the news that I had already traded six quarts of the stuff for over a hundred dollars' worth of cordwood.

"We'll never get it across the river to the markets," he said dolefully. "I came over this morning in a canoe. Ice is all out."

"What about the Onondaga Jam?" I said. He winked.

"That'll do. I'd forgotten it," he answered, and chirped up right away like a kid.

But I hadn't forgotten the Jam. It had been a regular gold-mine to me all that open winter,

when the ice froze and thawed every week and finally jammed itself clean to the river bottom in the throat of the bend up at Onondaga, and the next day the thermometer fell to eleven degrees below zero, freezing it into a solid block that bridged the river for traffic, and saved my falling fortunes.

"And where's the whiskey hidden?" he asked after awhile.

"No you don't," I laughed. "Parson or pal, no man living knows or will know where it is till he helps me haul it away. I'll trust none of you."

"I'm not a thief," he pouted.

"No," I said, "but you're blasted hard up, and I don't intend to place temptation in your way."

He laughed good-naturedly and turned the subject aside just as Lige Smith and Jack Jackson came in with an unusual companion that put a stop to further talk. Women were never seen at night time around Jake's; even his wife was invisible, and I got a sort of shock when I saw old Cayuga Joe's girl, Elizabeth, following at the boys' heels. It had been raining and the girl, a full blood Cayuga, shivered in the damp and crouched beside the stove.

Tom Barrett started when he saw her. His color rose and he began to mark up the table with his thumb nail. I could see he felt his fix. The girl—Indian right through—showed no sur-

prise at seeing him there, but that did not mean she would keep her mouth shut about it next day. Tom was undoubtedly *discovered.*

Notwithstanding her unwelcome presence, however, Jackson managed to whisper to me that the Forest Warden and his officers were alive and bound for the Reserve the following day. But it didn't worry me worth a cent; I knew we were safe as a church with Tom Barrett's clerical coat in our midst. He was coming over to our corner now.

"That hundred's right on the dead square, Dan?" he asked anxiously, taking my arm and moving to the window.

I took a roll of bank notes from my trousers' pocket and with my back to the gang counted out ten tens. I always carry a good wad with me with a view to convenience if I have to make a hurried exit from the scene of my operations.

He shook his head and stood away. "Not till I've earned it, McLeod."

What fools very young men make of themselves sometimes. The girl arose, folding her damp shawl over her head, and made towards the door; but he intercepted her, saying it was late and as their ways lay in the same direction, he would take her home. She shot a quick glance at him and went out. Some little uneasy action of his caught my notice. In a second my suspicions were aroused; the meeting had been

arranged, and I knew from what I had seen him to be that the girl was doomed.

It was all very well for me to do up Cayuga Joe—he was the Indian whose hundred dollars' worth of cordwood I owned in lieu of six quarts of bad whiskey—but his women-folks were entitled to be respected at least while I was around. I looked at my watch; it was past midnight. I suddenly got boiling hot clean through.

"Look here, Tom Barrett," I said, "I ain't a saint, as everybody knows; but if you don't treat that girl right, you'll have to square it up with me, d'you understand?"

He threw me a nasty look. "Keep your gallantry for some occasion when it's needed, Dan McLeod," he sneered, and with a laugh I didn't like, he followed the girl out into the rain.

I walked some distance behind them for two miles. When they reached her father's house and went in, I watched her through the small uncurtained window put something on the fire to cook, then arouse her mother, who even at that late hour sat beside the stove smoking a clay pipe. The old woman had apparently met with some accident; her head and shoulders were bound up, and she seemed in pain. Barrett talked with her considerably and once when I caught sight of his face, it was devilish with some black passion I did not recognize. Although I felt sure the girl was now all right for the night, there was some-

thing about this meeting I didn't like; so I lay around until just daylight when Jackson and Lige Smith came through the bush as prearranged should I not return to Jake's.

It was not long before Elizabeth and Tom came out again and entered a thick little bush behind the shanty. Lige lifted the axe off the woodpile with a knowing look, and we all three followed silently. I was surprised to find it a well beaten and equally well concealed trail. All my suspicions returned. I knew now that Barrett was a bad lot all round, and as soon as I had quit using him and his coat, I made up my mind to rid my quarters of him; fortunately I knew enough about him to use that knowledge as a whip-lash.

We followed them for something over a mile, when—heaven and hell! The trail opened abruptly on the clearing where lay my recently acquired cordwood with my five barrels of whiskey concealed in its midst.

The girl strode forward, and with the strength of a man, pitched down a dozen sticks with lightning speed.

"There!" she cried, turning to Tom. "There you find him—you find him whiskey. You say you spill. No more my father he's drunk all day, he beat my mother."

I stepped out.

"So, Tom Barrett," I said, "you've played the d——d sneak and hunted it out!"

He fairly jumped at the sound of my voice; then he got white as paper, and then—something came into his face that I never saw before. It was a look like his father's, the old missionary.

"Yes, McLeod," he answered. "And I've hunted *you* out. It's cost me the loss of a whole term at college and a considerable amount of self-respect, but I've got my finger on you now!"

The whole infernal trick burst right in on my intelligence. If I had had a revolver, he would have been a dead man; but border traders nowadays are not desperadoes with bowie knives and hip pockets——

"You surely don't mean to split on me?" I asked.

"I surely don't mean to do anything else," he cheeked back.

"Then, Tom Barrett," I sputtered, raging, "you're the dirtiest cad and the foulest liar that ever drew the breath of life."

"I dare say I am," he said smoothly. Then with rising anger he advanced, peering into my face with his foxy eyes. "And I'll tell you right here, Dan McLeod, I'd be a hundred times a cad, and a thousand times a liar to save the souls and bodies of our Indians from going to hell, through your cursed whiskey."

I have always been a brave man, but I confess I felt childishly scared before the wild, mesmeric power of his eyes. I was unable to move a finger, but I blurted out boastfully: "If it wasn't for

your preacher's hat and coat I'd send your sneaking soul to Kingdom Come, right here!"

Instantly he hauled off his coat and tie and stood with clenched fists while his strange eyes fairly spat green fire.

"Now," he fumed, "I've discarded my cloth, Dan McLeod. You've got to deal with a man now, not with a minister."

To save my immortal soul I can't tell why I couldn't stir. I only know that everything seemed to drop out of sight except his two little blazing eyes. I stood like a fool, queered, dead queered right through.

He turned politely to the girl. "You may go, Elizabeth," he said, "and thank you for your assistance." The girl turned and went up the trail without a word.

With the agility of a cat he sprang on to the wood-pile, pitched off enough cordwood to expose my entire "cellar;" then going across to Lige, he coolly took the axe out of his hand. His face was white and set, but his voice was natural enough as he said:

"Now, gentlemen, whoever cares to interrupt me will get the blade of this axe buried in his brain, as heaven is my witness."

I didn't even curse as he split the five barrels into slivers and my well-fought-for whiskey soaked into the slush. Once he lifted his head and looked at me, and the mouth I didn't under-

stand revealed itself; there was something about it like a young Napoleon's.

I never hated a man in my life as I hated Tom Barrett then. That I daren't resist him made it worse. I watched him finish his caddish job, throw down the axe, take his coat over his arm, and leave the clearing without a word.

But no sooner was he out of sight than my devilish temper broke out, and I cursed and blasphemed for half an hour. I'd have his blood if it cost my neck a rope, and that too before he could inform on us. The boys were with me, of course, poor sort of dogs with no grit of their own, and with the axe as my only weapon we left the bush and ran towards the river.

I fairly yelled at my good luck as I reached the high bank. There, a few rods down shore, beside the open water sat Tom Barrett, calling something out to his folks across the river, and from upstream came the deafening thunder of the Onondaga Jam that, loosened by the rain, was shouldering its terrific force downwards with the strength of a million drunken demons.

We had him like a rat in a trap, but his foxy eyes had seen us. He sprang to his feet, hesitated for a fraction of a moment, saw the murder in our faces, then did what any man but a fool would have done—ran.

We were hot on his heels. Fifty yards distant an old dug-out lay hauled up. He ran it down

into the water, stared wildly at the oncoming jam, then at us, sprang into the canoe and grabbed the paddle.

I was murderously mad. I wheeled the axe above my shoulder and let fly at him. It missed his head by three inches.

He was paddling for dear life now, and, our last chance gone, we stood riveted to the spot, watching him. On the bluff across the river stood his half-blood mother, the raw March wind whipping her skirts about her knees; but her strained, ashen face showed she never felt its chill. Below with his feet almost in the rapidly rising water, stood the old missionary, his scant grey hair blowing across his eyes that seemed to look out into eternity—amid stream Tom, paddling with the desperation of death, his head turning every second with the alertness of an animal to gauge the approaching ice-shove.

Even I wished him life then. Twice I thought him caught in the crush, but he was out of it like an arrow, and in another moment he had leapt ashore while above the roar of the grinding jam I heard him cry out with a strange exultation:

"Father, I've succeeded. I have had to be a scoundrel and a cad, but *I've trapped them at last!*"

He staggered forward then, sobbing like a child, and the old man's arms closed round him,

just as two heavy jaws of ice snatched the dug-out, hurled it off shore and splintered it to atoms.

Well! I had made a bad blunder, which I attempted to rectify by reaching Buffalo that night; but Tom Barrett had won the game. I was arrested at Fort Erie, handcuffed, jailed, tried, convicted of attempted assault and illicit whiskey-trading on the Grand River Indian Reserve—and spent the next five years in Kingston Penitentiary, the guest of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria.

# Mother o' the Men

**A Story of the Canadian North-West Mounted Police**

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THE commander's wife stood on the deck of the "North Star" looking at the receding city of Vancouver as if to photograph within her eyes and heart every detail of its wonderful beauty—its clustering, sisterly houses, its holly hedges, its ivied walls, its emerald lawns, its teeming streets and towering spires. She seemed to realize that this was the end of the civilized trail; that henceforth, for many years, her sight would know only the unbroken line of icy ridge and sky of the northernmost outposts of the great Dominion. To her hand clung a little boy of ten, and about her hovered some twenty young fellows, gay in the scarlet tunics, the flashing buffalo-head buttons, that bespoke the soldierly uniform of the Canadian North-West Mounted Police. They were the first detachment bound for the Yukon, and were under her husband's command.

She was the only woman in the "company." The major had purposely selected unmarried men for his staff, for in the early nineties the Arctic was no place for a woman. But when the Govern-

ment at Ottawa saw fit to commission Major Lysle to face the frozen North, and with a handful of men build and garrison a fort at the rim of the Polar Seas, Mrs. Lysle quietly remarked, "I shall accompany you, so shall the boy," and the major blessed her in his heart, for had she not so decided, it would mean absolute separation from wife and child for from three to five years, as in those days no railways, no telegraph lines, stretched their pulsing fingers into the Klondyke. One mail went in, one mail came out, each year—that was all.

"It's good-bye, Graham lad," said one of the scarlet-coated soldiers, tossing the little boy to his back. "Look your longest at those paved streets, and the green, green things. There'll be months of just snow away up there," and he nodded towards the north.

"Oh, but father says it won't be lonely at all up there," asserted the child. "He says I'll grow *terribly* big in a few years; that people always grow in the North, and maybe I'll soon be able to wear buffalo buttons and have stripes on my sleeve like you;" and the childish fingers traced the outline of the sergeant's chevrons.

"I hope, dear, that you shall do all that, soon," said Mrs. Lysle; "but first you must *win* those stripes, my boy, and if you win them as the sergeant did, mother shall be very proud of you."

At which, the said sergeant hastily set the boy down, and, with confusion written all over his strong young face, made some excuse to disappear, for no man in the world is as shy or modest about his deeds of valor as is a North-West "Mounted."

"Won't you tell me, mother, how Sergeant Black got those stripes on his sleeve?" begged the boy.

"Perhaps to-night, son, when you are in bed—just before mother says good-night—we'll see. But look! there is the city, fading, fading." Then after a short silence: "There, Graham, it has gone."

"But isn't that it 'way over there, mother?" persisted the boy. "I see the sun shining on the roofs."

Mrs. Lysle shook her head. "No, dearie; that is the snow on the mountain peaks. The city has —gone."

But far into the twilight she yet stood watching the purple sea, the dove-gray coast. Her world was with her—the man she had chosen for her life partner, and the little boy that belonged to them both—but there are times even in the life of a wife and mother when her soul rebels at cutting herself off from her womenkind, and all that environment of social life among women means, even if the act itself is voluntary on her part. It was a relief, then, from her rather som-

bre musing at the ship's rail, when the major lightly placed both hands on her shoulders and said, "Grahamie has toddled off to the stateroom. The sea air is weighting down his eyelids."

"Sea air?" laughed Mrs. Lysle. "Don't you believe it, Horace. The young monkey has been just scampering about the deck with the men until his little legs are tired out. I'm half afraid our 'Mounted' boys bid fair to spoil him. I'll go to him, for I promised him a story to-night."

"Which you would rather perish than not tell him, if you promised," smiled the major. "You govern that boy the same way I do my men, eh, dear?"

"It's the only way to govern boys or soldiers," she laughed back from the head of the companion way. "Then both boy and soldier will keep their promises to you."

The major watched her go below, then said to himself, "She's right—she's always right. She was right to come north, and bring him, too. But I am a coward, for I daren't tell her she'll have to part from him, or from me, some day. He will have to be sent to the front again; he can't grow up unlearned, untaught, and there are no schools in our Arctic world, and she must go with him, or stay with me; but I can't tell her. Yes, I'm a coward." But Major Lysle was the only person in all the world who would have thought or said so.

"And will you tell me how Sergeant Black won his stripes, mother, before I go to sleep?" begged Graham.

"Yes, little 'North-West,'" she replied, using the pet name the men in barracks frequently called the child. "It's just a wee story of one man fighting it out alone—just alone, single-handed—with no reinforcements but his own courage, his own self-reliance."

"That's what father says, isn't it, mother, to just do things yourself?" asked the boy.

"That's it, dear, and that is what Sergeant Black did. He was only corporal then, and he was dispatched from headquarters to arrest some desperate horse thieves who were trying to drive a magnificent bunch of animals across the boundary line into the United States, and then sell them. These men were breaking two laws. They had not only stolen the horses, but were trying to evade the American Customs. Your father always called them 'The Rapparees,' for they were Irish, and fighters, and known from the Red River to the Rockies as plunderers and desperadoes. There was some trouble to the north at the same time; barracks was pretty well thinned; not a man could be spared to help him. But when Corporal Black got his instructions and listened to the commanding officer say, 'If that detachment returns from the Qu'Appelle Valley within twenty-four hours, I'll order them out to assist

An Indian Dog Train.

you, corporal,' the plucky little soldier just stood erect, clicked his heels together, saluted, and replied, 'I can do it alone, sir.'

"'I notice you don't say you *think* you can do it alone,' remarked the officer dryly. He was a lenient man and often conversed with his men.

"'It is not my place to *think,* sir. I've just got to *do,*' replied the corporal, and saluting again, he was gone.

"All that night he galloped up the prairie trail on the track of the thieves, and just before daybreak he sighted them, entrenched in a coulee, where their campfires made no glow, and the neighing horses could not be heard. There were six men all told, busying themselves getting breakfast and staking the animals preparatory to hiding through the day hours, and getting across the boundary line the next night. Both men and beasts were wearied with the long journey, but Corporal Black is the sort of man that *never* wearies in either brain or body. He never hesitated a second. Jerking his rat-skin cap down, covering his face as much as possible, he rode silently around to the south of the encampment, clutched a revolver in each hand, and rode within earshot, then said four words:

"'Stand, or I fire!' If a cyclone had swooped down on them, the thieves could not have been more astounded. But they stood, and stood yards away from their own guns. Then they demanded to know who he was, for of course they thought

him a thief like themselves, probably following them to capture their spoil. Then Corporal Black unbuttoned his great-coat and flung it wide open, displaying the brilliant scarlet tunic of our own dear Mounted Police. They needed no other reply. At the point of his revolver he ordered them to unstake the horses. Then not one man was allowed to mount, but, breakfastless and frenzied, they were compelled to walk before him, driving the stolen animals ahead, mile upon mile, league after league.

"Father says it was a strange-looking procession that trudged into barracks. Twenty beautiful, spirited horses, six hangdog-looking thieves, with a single exhausted horse in the rear, on which was mounted an alert, keen-eyed and very hungry young soldier who wore a scarlet tunic and buffalo-head buttons. The next day Corporal Black had another stripe on his sleeve."*

Her voice ceased, and she looked down at her son. The child lay for a moment, wide-eyed and tense. Then some indescribable quality seemed to make him momentarily too large, too tall, for the narrow ship's berth. Then:

"And he fought it out *alone,* mother, just alone —single-handed?"

" Yes, Grahamie," she said, softly.

* The foregoing story is an actual occurrence. The author had the honor of knowing personally the North-West Mounted Policeman who achieved his rank through this action.

"Fought alone!" he said almost to himself. Then aloud: "Thank you, mother, for telling me that story. Perhaps some day I'll have to fight it out alone, and when I do, I'll try to remember Sergeant Black. Good-night, mother."

"Good-night, my boy."

* * * * * * * * *

The long, long winter was doing its worst, and that was unspeakable in its dreariness and its misery. The "Fort" was just about completed before things froze up—narrow, small quarters constructed of rough logs, surrounded by a stockade—but above its roof the Union Jack floated, and beneath it flashed the scarlet tunics, the buffalo-head buttons, the clanking spurs of as brave a band of men, "queened over" by as courageous a woman, as ever Gibraltar or the Throne Room knew.

As time went on the major's wife began to find herself "Mother o' the Men" (as an old Klondyker named her), as well as of her own boy. Those blizzard-blown, snow-hardened, ice-toughened soldiers went to her for everything—sympathy, assistance, advice—for in that lonely outpost military lines were less strictly drawn, and she could oftentimes do for the men what would be considered amazingly unofficial, were those little humane kindnesses done in barracks at Regina or Macleod or Calgary. She nursed the men through every illness, preparing the food

herself for the invalids. She attended to many a frozen face and foot and finger. She smoothed out their differences, inspirited them when they grew discouraged, talked to them of their own people, so that their home ties should not be entirely severed because they could write letters or receive them but once a year. But there were days when the sight of a woman's face would have been a glimpse of paradise to her, days when she almost wildly regretted her boy had not been a girl—just a little sweet-voiced girl, a thing of her own sex and kind. But it always seemed at these moments that Grahamie would providentially rush in to her with some glad story of sport or adventure, and she would snatch him tightly in her arms and say, "No, no, boy of mine, I don't want even a girlie, if I may only keep you." And once when her thoughts had been more than usually traitorous in wishing he had been a girl, the child seemed to divine some idea of her struggle; for a moment his firm little fingers caught her hand encouragingly, and he said in a whisper, "Are you fighting it out alone, mother—just single-handed?"

"Just single-handed, dearest," she replied.

Then he scampered away, but paused to call back gravely, "Remember Sergeant Black, mother."

"Yes, Grahamie, I'll try to," she replied brightly. At that moment he was the lesser child of the two.

And so the winter crept slowly on, and the brief, brilliant summer flitted in, then out, like a golden dream. The second snows were upon the little fort, the second Christmas, the second long, long weeks and months of the new year. An unspoken horror was staring them all in the face: navigation did not open when expected, and supplies were running low, pitifully low. The smoked and dried meats, the canned things, flour, sealed lard, oatmeal, hard-tack, dried fruits—*everything* was slowly but inevitably giving out day upon day. Before and behind them stretched hummocks of trailless snow. Not an Indian, not a dog train, not even a wild animal, had set foot in that waste for weeks. In early March the major's wife had hidden a single package of gelatine, a single tin of dried beef, and a single half pound of cornstarch. "If sickness comes to my boys" (she did not say boy), "I shall at least have saved these," she told herself, in justification of her act. "A sick man cannot live on beans." But now they were down to beans—just beans and lard boiled together. Then a day dawned when there was not even a spoonful of lard left. "Beans straight!"—it was the death knell, for beans straight—beans without grease—kill the strongest man in a brief span of days. Oh, that the ice bridges would melt, the seas open, the ships come!

But that night the men at mess had beans with unlimited grease, its peculiar flavor peppered and

spiced out of it. Life, life was to be theirs even yet! What had renewed it?

But one of the men had caught something on his fork and extracted it from the food on his plate. It was an overlooked *wick*. The major's wife had begun to boil up the tallow candles.* But the cheer that shook that rough log roof came right from hearts that blessed her, and brought her to the door of the men's mess-room. The men were on their feet instantly. "A light has broken upon us, or rather *within* us, Mrs. Lysle!" cried a self-selected spokesman.

"Illuminating, isn't it, boys?" She laughed, then turned away, for the cheers and tears were very close together.

Then one day when even starving stomachs almost revolted at the continued coarse mixture, a ribbon of blue proclaimed the open sea, and into those waters swept the longed-for ship. Yet, strangely enough, that night the "Mother o' the Men" wept a storm of tears, the only tears she had yielded to in those long five years. For with its blessing of food the ship had her hold bursting with liquors and wines, the hideous commerce that invades the pioneer places of the earth. Should the already weakened, ill-fed and scurvy-threatened garrison break into those supplies, all the labor and patience and mothering of this courageous woman would be useless, for after a bean diet in the Northern latitudes,

* Fact.

whiskey is deadly to brain and body, and the victim maddens or dies.

"You are crying, mother, and the ship here at last!" said Grahamie's voice at her shoulder. "Crying when we are all so happy."

"Mother is a little upset, dear. You must try to forget you ever saw her eyes wet."

"I'll forget," said the boy with a finality she could not question. "The ship is so full of good things, mother. We'll think of that, and—forget, won't we?" he added.

"*All* the things in the ship are not good, Grahamie, boy. If they were, mother would not cry," she said.

"I see," he said, but stole from her side with a strained, puzzled look in his young eyes.

Outside he was met by a laughing, joyous dozen of men. One swung the child to his shoulder, shouting, "Hurrah, little 'North-West'! Hurrah! we are all coming to pay tribute to your mother. Look at the dainties we have got for her from the ship!"

"I'm afraid you can't see mother just now," said the boy. "Mother is a little upset. You see, the ship is so full of good things—but then, *all* the things in the ship are not good. If they were, mother would not cry." In the last words he unconsciously imitated his mother's voice.

A profound silence enveloped the men. Then one spoke. "She'll never have cause to cry about anything *I* do, boys."

"Nor I!" "Nor I!" "Nor I!" rang out voice after voice.

"Run back, you blessed little 'North-West,' and tell mother not to be scared for the boys. We'll stand by her to a man. She'll never regret that ship's coming in," said the gallant soldier, slipping the boy to the ground. And to the credit of the men who wore buffalo-head buttons, she never did.

And in all her Yukon years the major's wife had but one more heartache. That agonizing winter had taught her many things, but the bitterest knowledge to come to her was the fact that her boy must be sent "to the front." To be sure, he was growing up the pet of all the police; he was becoming manlier, sturdier, more self-reliant every day. But education he *must* have, and another winter of such deprivation and horror he was too young, too tender, to endure. It was then that the battle arose in her heart. The boy was to be sent to college. Was it her place to accompany him to the distant South-east, to live by herself alone in the college town, just to be near him and watch over his young life, or was it here with her pioneer soldier husband, and his little isolated garrison of "boys" whom she had mothered for two years?

The inevitable day came when she had to shut her teeth and watch Grahamie go aboard the southward-bound vessel alone, in the care of a policeman who was returning on sick leave

—to watch him stand at the rail, his little face growing dimmer and more shadowy as the sea widened between them—watch him through tearless, courageous eyes, then turn away with the hopelessness of knowing that for one entire endless year she must wait for word of his arrival.* But his last brave good-bye words rang through her ears every day of that eternal year: "We'll remember Sergeant Black, won't we, mother? And we'll each fight it out alone, single-handed, and maybe they'll give us a chevron for our sleeves when it's over."

But that night when the barracks was wrapped in gloom over the loss of its boy chum, the surgeon appeared in the men's quarters. "Hello, boys!" he said, none too cheerfully. "Dull doings, I say. I'm busy enough, though, keeping an eye on Madam, the major's lady. She's so deadly quiet, so self-controlled, I'm just a little afraid. I wish something would happen to—well, make her less calm."

"*I'll* 'happen,' doctor," chirped up a genial-looking young chap named O'Keefe. "I'll get sick and threaten to die. You say it's serious; she'll be all interest and medicine spoons, and making me jelly inside an hour."

The surgeon eyed him sternly, then: "O'Keefe," he said, "you're the cleverest man I ever came across in the force, and I've been in it eleven

* Fact.

years. But, man alive! what have you been doing to yourself? Overwork, no food—why, man, you're sick; look as if you had fever and a touch of pneumonia. You're a very sick man. Go to bed at once—at once, I say!"

O'Keefe looked the surgeon in the eye, winked meaningly, and O'Keefe turned in, although it was but early afternoon. At six o'clock an orderly stood at the door of the major's quarters. Mrs. Lysle was standing on the steps, her eyes fixed on the far horizon across which a ship had melted away.

"Beg pardon, madam," said the orderly, saluting, "but young O'Keefe is very ill. We have had the surgeon, but the—the—pain's getting worse. He's just yelling with agony."

"I'll go at once, orderly. I should have been told before," she replied; and burying her own heartache, she hurried to the men's quarters. Her anxious eyes sought the surgeon's. "Oh, doctor!" she said, "this poor fellow must be looked after. What can I do to help?"

"Everything, Mrs. Lysle," gruffed the surgeon with a professional air. "He is very ill. He must be kept wrapped in hot linseed poultices and—"

"Oh, I say, doctor," remonstrated poor O'Keefe, "I'm not that bad."

"You're a very sick man," scowled the surgeon. "Now, Mrs. Lysle has graciously offered to help nurse you. She'll see that you have hot fomen-

tations every half hour. I'll drop in twice a day to see how you are getting along." And with that miserable prospect before him, poor O'Keefe watched the surgeon disappear.

"I simply *had* to order those half-hour fomentations, old man," apologized the surgeon that night. "You see, she must be kept busy—just kept at it every minute we can make her do so. Do you think you can stand it?"

"Of course I can," fumed the victim. "But for goodness' sake, don't put me on sick rations! I'll die, sure, if you do."

"I've ordered you the best the commissariat boasts—heaps of meat, butter, even eggs, my boy. Think of it—*eggs*—you lucky young Turk!" laughed the surgeon.

Then followed nights and days of torture. The "boys" would line up to the "sick-room" four times daily, and blandly ask how he was.

"How *am* I?" young O'Keefe would bellow. "How *am* I? I'm well and strong enough to brain every one of you fellows, surgeon included, when I get out of this!"

"But when *are* you going to get out? When will you be out of danger?" they would chuckle.

"Just when I see that haunted look go out of her eyes, and not till then!" he would roar.

And he kept his word. He was really weak when he got up, and pretended to be weaker, but the lines of acute self-control had left Mrs. Lysle's

face, the suffering had gone from her eyes, the day the noble O'Keefe took his first solid meal in her presence.

Even the major never discovered that worthy bit of deception. But a year later, when the mail went out, the surgeon sent the entire story to Graham, who, in writing to his mother the following year, perplexed her greatly by saying:

". . . . But there are three men in the force I love better than anyone in the world except you, mother. The first, of course, is father, the others, Sergeant Black and Private O'Keefe."

"Why O'Keefe?" she asked herself.

But loyal little "North-West" never told her.

# The Nest Builder

"Well! if some women aren't born just to laugh!" remarked the station agent's wife. "Have you seen that round-faced woman in the waiting-room?"

"No," replied the agent. "I've been too busy; I've had to help unload freight. I heard some children in there, though; they were playing and laughing to beat the band."

"*Nine* of them, John! *Nine* of them, and the oldest just twelve!" gasped his wife. "Why, I'd be crazy if I were in her place. She's come all the way from Grey or Bruce in Ontario—I forget which—with not a soul to help her with that flock. Three of them are almost babies. The smallest one is a darling—just sits on the bench in there and dimples and gurgles and grins all the time."

"Hasn't she got a husband?" asked John.

"Of course," asserted his wife. "But that's just the problem now, or rather he's the problem. He came to Manitoba a year ago, and was working right here in this town. He doesn't seem to have had much luck, and left last week for some

ranch away back of Brandon, she now finds out; she must have crossed his letter as she came out. She expected to find him here, and now she is in that waiting-room with nine children, no money to go further, or to go to a hotel even, and she's—well, she's just good-natured and smiling, and not a bit worried. As I say, some women are born just to laugh."

"Have they anything to eat?" asked the agent, anxiously.

"Stacks of it—a huge hamper. But I took the children what milk we had, and made her take a cup of good hot tea. She *would* pay me, however, I couldn't stop her. But I noticed she has mighty little change in her purse, and she said she had no money, and said it with a round, untroubled, smiling face." The agent's wife spoke the last words almost with envy.

"I'll try and locate the husband," said the agent.

"Yes, she'll get his address to-night, she says," explained the wife; "but no one knows when he will get here. Most likely he's twenty miles away from Brandon, and they will have to send out for him."

Which eventually proved to be the case; and three days elapsed before the husband and father was able to reach the little border town where his wife and ample family had been installed as residents of the general waiting-room of a small, scantily-equipped station. No beds, no washing

conveniences, no table, no chairs; just the wall seats, with a roof above them and the pump water at the end of the platform to drink from and dabble in. The distressed man arrived, harassed and anxious, only to be met by a round-faced, laughing wife and nine round-faced, laughing children, who all made sport of their "camping" experience, and assured him they could have "stood it" a little longer, if need be.

But they slept in beds that night—glorious, feathery beds, that were in reality but solid hemp mattresses—in the cheapest lodging-house in town.

Then began the home-building. Henderson had secured a quarter section of land and made two payments on it when his wife and children arrived, with all their "settlers' effects" in a freight car, which, truth to tell, were meagre enough. They had never really owned a home in the East, and when, with saving and selling, she managed to follow her husband into the promising world of Manitoba, she determined to possess a home, no matter how crude, how small, how remote. So Henderson hired horses and "teamed" out sufficient lumber and tar-paper to erect a shack which measured exactly eighteen by twelve feet, then sodded the roof in true Manitoba style, and into this cramped abode Mrs. Henderson stowed her household goods and nine small children. With the stove, table, chairs, tubs and trunks, there was room for but one bed

to be put up. Poor, unresourceful Henderson surveyed the crowded shack helplessly, but that round-faced, smiling wife of his was not a particle discouraged. "We'll just build in two sets of bunks, on each end of the house," she laughed. "The children won't mind sleeping on 'shelves,' for the bread-winners must have the bed."

So they economized space with a dozen such little plans, and all through the unpacking and settling and arranging, she would say every hour or two, "Oh, it's a little crowded and stuffy, but it's *ours*—it's *home,*" until Henderson and the children caught something of her inspiration, and the sod-roof shack became "home" in the sweetest sense of the word.

There are some people who "make" time for everything, and this remarkable mother was one. That winter she baked bread for every English bachelor ranchman within ten miles. She did their washing and ironing, and never neglected her own, either. She knitted socks for them, and made and sold quantities of Saskatoon berry jam. When spring came she had over fifty dollars of her own, with which she promptly bought a cow. Then late in March they made a small first payment on a team of horses, and "broke land" for the first time, plowing and seeding a few acres of virgin prairie and getting a start.

But her quaintest invention to utilize every resource possible was a novel scheme for chicken-raising. One morning the children came in

greatly excited over finding a wild duck's nest in the nearby "slough." Mrs. Henderson told them to be very careful not to frighten the bird, but to go back and search every foot of the grassy edges and try to discover other nests. They succeeded in finding three. That day a neighboring English rancher, driving past on his way to Brandon, twenty miles distant, called out, "Want anything from town, Mrs. Henderson?"

"Eggs, just eggs, if you will bring them, like a good boy," she answered, running out to the trail to meet him.

"Why, you *are* luxurious to-day, and eggs at fifty cents a dozen," he exclaimed.

"Never mind," she replied, "they're not nearly so luxurious as chickens. You just bring me a dozen and a half. Pay *any* price, but be sure they are fresh, new laid, right off the nest. Now just insist on that, or we shall quarrel." And with a menacing shake of a forefinger and a customary laugh, she handed him a precious bank note to pay for the treasures.

The next day Mrs. Henderson adroitly substituted hen's eggs for the wild ducks' own, and the shy, pretty water fowls, returning from their morning's swim, never discovered the fraud.*

"Six eggs under three sitters—eighteen chicks, if we're lucky enough to have secured fertile eggs," mused Mrs. Henderson. "Oh, well, we'll see." And they *did* see. They saw exactly

* Fact.

eighteen fluffy, peeping chicks, whose timid little mothers could not understand why their broods disappeared one by one from the long, wet grasses surrounding the nest. But in a warm canton flannel lined basket near the Henderson's stove the young arrivals chirped and picked at warm meal as sturdily as if hatched in a coop by a commonplace barnyard "Biddy." And every one of those chicks lived and grew and fattened into a splendid flock, and the following spring they began sitting on their own eggs. But the good-hearted woman, in relating the story, would always say that she felt like a thief and a robber whenever she thought of that shy, harmless little wild duck who never had the satisfaction of seeing her brood swim in the "slough."

All this happened more than twenty years ago, yet when I met Mrs. Henderson last autumn, as she was journeying to Prince Albert to visit a married daughter, her wonderfully youthful face was as round and smiling as if she had never battled through the years in a hand-to-hand fight to secure a home in the pioneer days of Manitoba. She is well off now, and lives no more in the twelve-by-eighteen-foot bunk-house, but when I asked her how she accomplished so much, she replied, "I just jollied things along, and laughed over the hard places. It makes them easier then."

So perhaps the station agent's wife was really right, after all, when she remarked that "some women were just born to laugh."

# The Tenas Klootchman*

THIS story came to me from the lips of Maarda herself. It was hard to realize, while looking at her placid and happy face, that Maarda had ever been a mother of sorrows, but the healing of a wounded heart oftentimes leaves a light like that of a benediction on a receptive face, and Maarda's countenance held something greater than beauty, something more like lovableness, than any other quality.

We sat together on the deck of the little steamer throughout the long violet twilight, that seems loath to leave the channels and rocky of the Upper Pacific in June time. We had dropped easily into conversation, for nothing so readily helps one to an introduction as does the friendly atmosphere of the extreme West, and I had paved the way by greeting her in the Chinook, to which she responded with a sincere and friendly handclasp.

Dinner on the small coast-wise steamers is almost a function. It is the turning-point of the

* In Chinook language "Tenas Klootchman" means "girl baby."

day, and is served English fashion, in the evening. The passengers "dress" a little for it, eat the meal leisurely and with relish. People who perhaps have exchanged no conversation during the day, now relax, and fraternize with their fellow men and women.

I purposely secured a seat at the dining-table beside Maarda. Even she had gone through a simple "dressing" for dinner, having smoothed her satiny black hair, knotted a brilliant silk handkerchief about her throat, and laid aside her large, heavy plaid shawl, revealing a fine delaine gown of green, bordered with two flat rows of black silk velvet ribbon. That silk velvet ribbon, and the fashion in which it was applied, would have bespoken her nationality, even had her dark copper-colored face failed to do so.

The average Indian woman adores silk and velvet, and will have none of cotton, and these decorations must be in symmetrical rows, not designs. She holds that the fabric is in itself excellent enough. Why twist it and cut it into figures that would only make it less lovely?

We chatted a little during dinner. Maarda told me that she and her husband lived at the Squamish River, some thirty-five miles north of Vancouver City, but when I asked if they had any children, she did not reply, but almost instantly called my attention to a passing vessel seen through the porthole. I took the hint, and said no more of family matters, but talked of the

fishing and the prospects of a good sockeye run this season.

Afterwards, however, while I stood alone on deck watching the sun set over the rim of the Pacific, I felt a feathery touch on my arm. I turned to see Maarda, once more enveloped in her shawl, and holding two deck stools. She beckoned with a quick uplift of her chin, and said, "We'll sit together here, with no one about us, and I'll tell you of the child." And this was her story:

She was the most beautiful little Tenas Klootchman a mother could wish for, bright, laughing, pretty as a spring flower, but—just as frail. Such tiny hands, such buds of feet! One felt that they must never take her out of her cradle basket for fear that, like a flower stem, she would snap asunder and her little head droop like a blossom.

But Maarda's skilful fingers had woven and plaited and colored the daintiest cradle basket in the entire river district for this little woodland daughter. She had fished long and late with her husband, so that the canner's money would purchase silk "blankets" to enwrap her treasure; she had beaded cradle bands to strap the wee body securely in its cosy resting-nest. Ah, it was such a basket, fit for an English princess to sleep in! Everything about it was fine, soft, delicate, and everything born of her mother-love.

So, for weeks, for even months, the little Tenas Klootchman laughed and smiled, waked and slept, dreamed and dimpled in her pretty playhouse. Then one day, in the hot, dry summer, there was no smile. The dimples did not play. The little flower paled, the small face grew smaller, the tiny hands tinier; and one morning, when the birds awoke in the forests of the Squamish, the eyes of the little Tenas Klootchman remained closed.

They put her to sleep under the giant cedars, the lulling, singing firs, the whispering pines that must now be her lullaby, instead of her mother's voice crooning the child-songs of the Pacific, that tell of baby foxes and gamboling baby wolves and bright-eyed baby birds. Nothing remained to Maarda but an empty little cradle basket, but smoothly-folded silken "blankets," but disused beaded bands. Often at nightfall she would stand alone, and watch the sun dip into the far waters, leaving the world as gray and colorless as her own life; she would outstretch her arms—pitifully empty arms—towards the west, and beneath her voice again croon the lullabies of the Pacific, telling of the baby foxes, the soft, furry baby wolves, and the little downy fledglings in the nests. Once in an agony of loneliness she sang these things aloud, but her husband heard her, and his face turned gray and drawn, and her soul told her she must not be heard again singing these things aloud.

And one evening a little steamer came into harbor. Many Indians came ashore from it, as the fishing season had begun. Among others was a young woman over whose face the finger of illness had traced shadows and lines of suffering. In her arms she held a baby, a beautiful, chubby, round-faced, healthy child that seemed too heavy for her wasted form to support. She looked about her wistfully, evidently seeking a face that was not there, and as the steamer pulled out of the harbor, she sat down weakly on the wharf, laid the child across her lap, and buried her face in her hands. Maarda touched her shoulder.

"Who do you look for?" she asked.

"For my brother Luke 'Alaska,'" replied the woman. "I am ill, my husband is dead, my brother will take care of me; he's a good man."

"Luke 'Alaska,'" said Maarda. What had she heard of Luke "Alaska?" Why, of course, he was one of the men her own husband had taken a hundred miles up the coast as axeman on a surveying party, but she dared not tell this sick woman. She only said: "You had better come with me. My husband is away, but in a day or two he will be able to get news to your brother. I'll take care of you till they come."

The woman arose gratefully, then swayed unsteadily under the weight of the child. Maarda's arms were flung out, yearningly, longingly, towards the baby.

"Where is your cradle basket to carry him

in?" she asked, looking about among the boxes and bales of merchandise the steamer had left on the wharf.

"I have no cradle basket. I was too weak to make one, too poor to buy one. I have *nothing,*" said the woman.

"Then let me carry him," said Maarda. "It's quite a walk to my place; he's too heavy for you."

The woman yielded the child gratefully, saying, "It's not a boy, but a Tenas Klootchman."

Maarda could hardly believe her senses. That splendid, sturdy, plump, big baby a Tenas Klootchman! For a moment her heart surged with bitterness. Why had her own little girl been so frail, so flower-like? But with the touch of that warm baby body, the bitterness faded. She walked slowly, fitting her steps to those of the sick woman, and jealously lengthening the time wherein she could hold and hug the baby in her yearning arms.

The woman was almost exhausted when they reached Maarda's home, but strong tea and hot, wholesome food revived her; but fever burned brightly in her cheeks and eyes. The woman was very ill, extremely ill. Maarda said, "You must go to bed, and as soon as you are there, I will take the canoe and go for a doctor. It is two or three miles, but you stay resting, and I'll bring him. We will put the Tenas Klootchman beside you in—" she hesitated. Her glance travelled up to the wall above, where a beautiful empty cradle

basket hung, with folded silken "blankets" and disused beaded bands.

The woman's gaze followed hers, a light of beautiful understanding pierced the fever glare of her eyes, she stretched out her hot hand protestingly, and said, "Don't put her in—that. Keep that, it is yours. She is used to being rolled only in my shawl."

But Maarda had already lifted the basket down, and was tenderly arranging the wrappings. Suddenly her hands halted, she seemed to see a wee flower face looking up to her like the blossom of a russet-brown pansy. She turned abruptly, and, going to the door, looked out speechlessly on the stretch of sea and sky glimmering through the tree trunks.

For a time she stood. Then across the silence broke the little murmuring sound of the baby half crooning, half crying, indoors, the little cradleless baby that, homeless, had entered her home. Maarda returned, and, lifting the basket, again arranged the wrappings. "The Tenas Klootchman shall have this cradle," she said, gently. The sick woman turned her face to the wall and sobbed.

It was growing dark when Maarda left her guests, and entered her canoe on the quest for a doctor. The clouds hung low, and a fine, slanting rain fell, from which she protected herself as best she could with a shawl about her shoulders, crossed in front, with each end tucked into

her belt beneath her arms—Indian-fashion. Around rocks and boulders, headlands and crags, she paddled, her little craft riding the waves like a cork, but pitching and plunging with every stroke. By and by the wind veered, and blew head on, and now and again she shipped water; her skirts began dragging heavily about her wet ankles, and her moccasins were drenched. The wind increased, and she discarded her shawl to afford greater freedom to her arm-play. The rain drove and slanted across her shoulders and head, and her thick hair was dripping with sea moisture and the downpour.

Sometimes she thought of beaching the canoe and seeking shelter until daylight. Then she again saw those fever-haunted eyes of the stranger who was within her gates, again heard the half wail of the Tenas Klootchman in her own baby's cradle basket, and at the sound she turned her back on the possible safety of shelter, and forged ahead.

It was a wearied woman who finally knocked at the doctor's door and bade him hasten. But his strong man's arm found the return journey comparatively easy paddling. The wind helped him, and Maarda also plied her bow paddle, frequently urging him to hasten.

It was dawn when they entered her home. The sick woman moaned, and the child fretted for food. The doctor bent above his patient, shaking his head ruefully as Maarda built the

fire, and attended to the child's needs before she gave thought to changing her drenched garments. All day she attended her charges, cooked, toiled, watched, forgetting her night of storm and sleeplessness in the greater anxieties of ministering to others. The doctor came and went between her home and the village, but always with that solemn headshake, that spoke so much more forcibly than words.

"She shall not die!" declared Maarda. "The Tenas Klootchman needs her, she shall not die!" But the woman grew feebler daily, her eyes grew brighter, her cheeks burned with deeper scarlet.

"We must fight for it now," said the doctor. And Maarda and he fought the dread enemy hour after hour, day after day.

Bereft of its mother's care, the Tenas Klootchman turned to Maarda, laughed to her, crowed to her, until her lonely heart embraced the child as a still evening embraces a tempestuous day. Once she had a long, terrible fight with herself. She had begun to feel her ownership in the little thing, had begun to regard it as her right to tend and pet it. Her heart called out for it; and she wanted it for her very own. She began to feel a savage, tigerish joy in thinking—aye, *knowing* that it really would belong to her and to her alone soon—very soon.

When this sensation first revealed itself to her, the doctor was there—had even told her the woman could not recover. Maarda's gloriously

womanly soul was horrified at itself. She left the doctor in charge, and went to the shore, fighting out this outrageous gladness, strangling it—killing it.

She returned, a sanctified being, with every faculty in her body, every sympathy of her heart, every energy of her mind devoted to bringing this woman back from the jaws of death. She greeted the end of it all with a sorrowing, half-breaking heart, for she had learned to love the woman she had envied, and to weep for the little child who lay so helplessly against her unselfish heart.

A beautifully lucid half-hour came to the fever-stricken one just before the Call to the Great Beyond!

"Maarda," she said, "you have been a good Tillicum to me, and I can give you nothing for all your care, your kindness—unless—" Her eyes wandered to her child peacefully sleeping in the delicately-woven basket. Maarda saw the look, her heart leaped with a great joy. Did the woman wish to give the child to her? She dared not ask for it. Suppose Luke "Alaska" wanted it. His wife loved children, though she had four of her own in their home far inland. Then the sick woman spoke:

"Your cradle basket and your heart were empty before I came. Will you keep my Tenas Klootchman as your own?—to fill them both again?"

Maarda promised. "Mine was a Tenas Klootchman, too," she said.

"Then I will go to her, and be her mother, wherever she is, in the Spirit Islands they tell us of," said the woman. "We will be but exchanging our babies, after all."

When morning dawned, the woman did not awake.

* * * * * * * * *

Maarda had finished her story, but the recollections had saddened her eyes, and for a time we both sat on the deck in the violet twilight without exchanging a word.

"Then the little Tenas Klootchman is yours now?" I asked.

A sudden radiance suffused her face, all trace of melancholy vanished. She fairly scintillated happiness.

"Mine!" she said. "All mine! Luke 'Alaska' and his wife said she was more mine than theirs, that I must keep her as my own. My husband rejoiced to see the cradle basket filled, and to hear me laugh as I used to.

"How I should like to see the baby!" I began.

"You shall," she interrupted. Then with a proud, half-roguish expression, she added:

"She is so strong, so well, so heavy; she sleeps a great deal, and wakes laughing and hungry."

As night fell, an ancient Indian woman came up the companion-way. In her arms she carried a beautifully-woven basket cradle, within which

nestled a round-cheeked, smiling-eyed baby. Across its little forehead hung locks of black, straight hair, and its sturdy limbs were vainly endeavoring to free themselves from the lacing of the "blankets." Maarda took the basket, with an expression on her face that was transfiguring.

"Yes, this is my little Tenas Klootchman," she said, as she unlaced the bands, then lifted the plump little creature out on to her lap.

Soon afterwards the steamer touched an obscure little harbor, and Maarda, who was to join her husband there, left me, with a happy good-night. As she was going below, she faltered, and turned back to me. "I think sometimes," she said, quietly, "the Great Spirit thought my baby would feel motherless in the far Spirit Islands, so He gave her the woman I nursed for a mother; and He knew I was childless, and He gave me this child for my daughter. Do you think I am right? Do you understand?"

"Yes," I said, "I think you are right, and I understand."

Once more she smiled radiantly, and turning, descended the companionway. I caught a last glimpse of her on the wharf. She was greeting her husband, her face a mirror of happiness. About the delicately-woven basket cradle she had half pulled her heavy plaid shawl, beneath which the two rows of black velvet ribbon bordering her skirt proclaimed once more her nationality.

# The Derelict

CRAGSTONE had committed what his world called a crime—an inexcusable offence that caused him to be shunned by society and estranged from his father's house. He had proved a failure.

Not one of his whole family connections could say unto the others, "I told you so," when he turned out badly.

They had all predicted that he was born for great things, then to discover that they had overestimated him was irritating, it told against their discernment, it was unflattering, and they thought him inconsiderate.

So, in addition to his failure, Cragstone had to face the fact that he had made himself unpopular among his kin.

As a boy he had been the pride of his family, as a youth, its hope of fame and fortune; he was clever, handsome, inventive, original, everything that society and his kind admired, but he criminally fooled them and their expectations, and they never forgave him for it.

He had dabbled in music, literature, law, everything—always with semi-success and brilliant

promise; he had even tried the stage, playing the Provinces for an entire season; then, ultimately sinking into mediocrity in all these occupations, he returned to London, a hopelessly useless, a pitiably gifted man. His chilly little aristocratic mother always spoke of him as "poor, dear Charles." His brothers, clubmen all, graciously alluded to him with, "deuced hard luck, poor Charlie." His father never mentioned his name.

Then he went into "The Church," sailed for Canada, idled about for a few weeks, when one of the great colonial bishops, not knowing what else to do with him, packed him off north as a missionary to the Indians.

And, after four years of disheartening labor amongst a semi-civilized people, came this girl Lydia into his life. This girl of the mixed parentage, the English father, who had been swept northward with the rush of lumber trading, the Chippewa mother, who had been tossed to his arms by the tide of circumstances. The girl was a strange composition of both, a type of mixed blood, pale, dark, slender, with the slim hands, the marvellously beautiful teeth of her mother's people, the ambition, the small tender mouth, the utter fearlessness of the English race. But the strange, laughless eyes, the silent step, the hard sense of honor, proclaimed her far more the daughter of red blood than of white.

And, with the perversity of his kind, Cragstone loved her; he meant to marry her because he

knew that he should not. What a monstrous thing it would be if he did! He, the shepherd of this half-civilized flock, the modern John Baptist; he, the voice of the great Anglican Church crying in this wilderness, how could he wed with this Indian girl who had been a common serving-maid in a house in Penetanguishene, and been dismissed therefrom with an accusation of theft that she could never prove untrue? How could he bring this reproach upon the Church? Why, the marriage would have no precedent; and yet he loved her, loved her sweet, silent ways, her listening attitudes, her clear, brown, consumptive-suggesting skin. She was the only thing in all the irksome mission life that had responded to him, had encouraged him to struggle anew for the spiritual welfare of this poor red race. Of course, in Penetanguishene they had told him she was irreclaimable, a thief, with ready lies to cover her crimes; for that very reason he felt tender towards her, she was so sinful, so pathetically human.

He could have mastered himself, perhaps, had she not responded, had he not seen the laughless eyes laugh alone for him, had she not once when a momentary insanity possessed them both confessed in words her love for him as he had done to her. But now? Well, now only this horrible tale of theft and untruth hung between them like a veil; now even with his arms locked about her, his eyes drowned in hers, his ears caught the whispers of calumny, his thoughts were per-

forated with the horror of his Bishop's censure, and these things rushed between his soul and hers, like some bridgeless deep he might not cross, and so his lonely life went on.

And then one night his sweet humanity, his grand, strong love rose up, battled with him, and conquered. He cast his pharisaical ideas, and the Church's "I am better than thou," aside forever; he would go now, to-night, he would ask her to be his wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for—

A shadow fell across the doorway of his simple home; it was August Beaver, the trapper, with the urgent request that he would come across to French Island at once, for old "Medicine" Joe was there, dying, and wished to see the minister. At another time Cragstone would have felt sympathetic, now he was only irritated; he wanted to find Lydia, to look in her laughless eyes, to feel her fingers in his hair, to tell her he did not care if she were a hundred times a thief, that he loved her, loved her, loved her, and he would marry her despite the Church, despite—

"Joe, he's near dead, you come now?" broke in August's voice. Cragstone turned impatiently, got his prayer-book, followed the trapper, took his place in the canoe, and paddled in silence up the bay.

The moon arose, large, limpid, flooding the cabin with a wondrous light, and making more

wan the features of a dying man, whose fever-wasted form lay on some lynx skins on the floor.

Cragstone was reading from the Book of Common Prayer the exquisite service of the Visitation of the Sick. Outside, the loons clanged up the waterways, the herons called across the islands, but no human things ventured up the wilds. Inside, the sick man lay, beside him August Beaver holding a rude lantern, while Cragstone's matchless voice repeated the Anglican formula. A spasm, an uplifted hand, and Cragstone paused. Was the end coming even before a benediction? But the dying man was addressing Beaver in Chippewa, whispering and choking out the words in his death struggle.

"He says he's bad man," spoke Beaver. A horrible, humorous sensation swept over Cragstone; he hated himself for it, but at college he had always ridiculed death-bed confessions; but in a second that feeling had vanished, he bent his handsome, fair face above the copper-colored countenance of the dying man. "Joe," he said, with that ineffable tenderness that had always drawn human hearts to him; "Joe, tell me before I pronounce the Absolution, how you have been 'bad'?"

"I steal three times," came the answer. "Oncet horses, two of them from farmer near Barrie. Oncet twenty fox-skins at North Bay; station man he in jail for those fox-skins now. Oncet gold watch from doctor at Penetanguishene."

The prayer-book rattled from Cragstone's hands and fell to the floor.

"Tell me about this watch," he mumbled. "How did you come to do it?"

"I liffe at the doctor's; I take care his horse, long time; old River's girl, Lydia, she work there too; they say she steal it; I sell to trader, the doctor he nefer know, he think Lydia."

Cragstone was white to the lips. "Joe," he faltered, "you are dying; do you regret this sin, are you sorry?"

An indistinct "yes" was all; death was claiming him rapidly.

But a great, white, purified love had swept over the young clergyman. The girl he worshipped could never now be a reproach to his calling, she was proved blameless as a baby, and out of his great human love arose the divine calling, the Christ-like sense of forgiveness, the God-like forgetfulness of injury and suffering done to his and to him, and once more his soft, rich voice broke the stillness of the Northern night, as the Anglican absolution of the dying fell from his lips in merciful tenderness:

"O Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences, and by His authority committed to me I absolve thee from all thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Beaver was holding the lantern close to the penitent's face; Cragstone, kneeling beside him, saw that the end had come already, and, after making the sign of the Cross on the dead Indian's forehead, the young priest arose and went silently out into the night.

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The sun was slipping down into the far horizon, fretted by the inimitable wonder of islands that throng the Georgian Bay; the blood-colored skies, the purpling clouds, the extravagant beauty of a Northern sunset hung in the west like the trailing robes of royalty, soundless in their flaring, their fading; soundless as the unbroken wilds which lay bathed in the loneliness of a dying day.

But on the color-flooded shore stood two, blind to the purple, the scarlet, the gold, blind to all else save the tense straining of the other's eyes; deaf to nature's unsung anthem, hearing only the other's voice. Cragstone stood transfixed with consternation. The memory of the past week of unutterable joy lay blasted with the awfulness of this moment, the memory of even that first day—when he had stood with his arms about her, had told her how he had declared her reclaimed name far and wide, how even Penetanguishene knew now that she had suffered blamelessly, how his own heart throbbed suffocatingly with the honor, the delight of being the poor means through which she had been righted in the accus-

ing eyes of their little world, and that now she would be his wife, his sweet, helping wife, and she had been great enough not to remind him that he had not asked her to be his wife until her name was proved blameless, and he was great enough not to make excuse of the resolve he had set out upon just when August Beaver came to turn the current of his life.

But he had other eyes to face to-night, eyes that blurred the past, that burned themselves into his being—the condemning, justly and righteously indignant eyes of his Bishop—while his numb heart, rather than his ears, listened to the words that fell from the prelate's lips like curses on his soul, like the door that would shut him forever outside the holy place.

"What have you done, you pretended servant of the living God? What use is this you have made of your Holy Orders? You hear the confessions of a dying man, you absolve and you bless him, and come away from the poor dead thief to shout his crimes in the ears of the world, to dishonor him, to be a discredit to your calling. Who could trust again such a man as you have proved to be—faithless to himself, faithless to his Church, faithless to his God?"

But Cragstone was on the sands at his accuser's feet. "Oh! my Lord," he cried, "I meant only to save the name of a poor, mistrusted girl, selfishly, perhaps, but I would have done the same thing just for humanity's sake had it been another to whom injustice was done."

"Your plea of justice is worse than weak; to save the good name of the living is it just to rob the dead?"

The Bishop's voice was like iron.

"I did not realize I was a priest, I only knew I was a *man*," and with these words Cragstone arose and looked fearlessly, even proudly, at the one who stood his judge.

"Is it not better, my Lord, to serve the living than the dead?"

"And bring reproach upon your Church?" said the Bishop, sternly.

It was the first thought Cragstone ever had of his official crime; he staggered under the horror of it, and the little, dark, silent figure, that had followed them unseen, realized in her hiding amid the shadows that the man who had lifted her into the light was himself being thrust down into irremediable darkness. But Cragstone only saw the Bishop looking at him as from a supreme height, he only felt the final stinging lash in the words: "When a man disregards the most sacred offices of his God, he will hardly reverence the claims of justice of a simple woman who knows not his world, and if he so easily flings his God away for a woman, just so easily will he fling her away for other gods."

And Lydia, with eyes that blazed like flame, watched the Bishop turn and walk frigidly up the sands, his indignation against this outrager of the Church declaring itself in every footfall.

Cragstone flung himself down, burying his face in his hands. What a wreck he had made of life! He saw his future, loveless, for no woman would trust him now; even the one whose name he had saved would probably be more unforgiving than the Church; it was the way with women when a man abandoned God and honor for them; and this nameless but blackest of sins, this falsity to one poor dying sinner, would stand between him and heaven forever, though through that very crime he had saved a fellow being. Where was the justice of it?

The purple had died from out the western sky, the waters of the Georgian Bay lay colorless at his feet, night was covering the world and stealing with inky blackness into his soul.

She crept out of her hiding-place, and, coming, gently touched his tumbled fair hair; but he shrank from her, crying: "Lydia, my girl, my girl, I am not for a good woman now! I, who thought you an outcast, a thief, not worthy to be my wife, to-night I am not an outcast of man alone, but of God."

But what cared she for his official crimes? She was a woman. Her arms were about him, her lips on his; and he who had, until now, been a portless derelict, who had vainly sought a haven in art, an anchorage in the service of God, had drifted at last into the world's most sheltered harbor—a woman's love.

But, of course, the Bishop took away his gown.